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ABSTRACT

This report, which is the seventh in a series, presents data from 1994 on high school dropout and retention rates and examines high school graduation and completion rates. Included is an analysis of the 1994 high school completion status and subsequent life activities of members of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 cohort of eighth graders. Time series data for the period from 1972 to 1994 are also included. The best and most current national data available were used to compile the report, including the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the Bureau of the Census. Data show that dropout rates have generally decreased over the last two decades, while completion rates have increased. In 1972, data from the CPS indicated that, of young adults under age 25, 6% dropped out of school that year, over 14% were dropouts, and about 83% of young adults aged 18 to 24 had completed high school with either a regular diploma or an equivalency certificate. In 1993, only about 5% dropped out, 11% were dropouts, and over 86% completed high school. Other findings of this report show that: close to one-half million students age 15-24 left school between October 1993 and October 1994; in October 1994 there were 3.7 million 16-24-year-olds who had not completed high school and were not enrolled in school; and in general, minority students were more likely than white students to have dropped out. Dropout rates were also higher for low income students and students in the Southern and Western regions of the country. Three appendixes contain standard error and time series tables, technical noted, and supplemental tables. (Contains 6 figures, 38 tables, 47 tables in Appendix A, 3 in Appendix B, and 12 in Appendix C.) (SLD)

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Dropout Rates in the United States: 1994

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Dropout Rates in the United States: 1994

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FOREWORD

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) collects and publishes information on the condition of education in the United States. Under mandate from the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvements Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-297), NCES released the first annual report on school dropouts in 1989.

This report, which is the seventh in the series, presents data for 1994 on high school dropout and retention rates. This report also examines high school completion and graduation rates. Included is an analysis of the 1994 high school completion status and subsequent life activities of members of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) cohort of eighth graders.

The report is based on the best and most current national data available at this time. It utilizes the Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census to develop national event and status dropout rates and the NELS:88 to develop 8th- through 12th-grade and 10th- through 12th-grade cohort dropout rates. NCES is currently pursuing an extensive, integrated program to expand and improve data collected about dropouts. To this end, a dropout statistics collection was initiated in the 1991-92 school year as a component of the NCES Common Core of Data (CCD); data from the second year of that collection are included in this report.

I hope the information in this report will be useful in discussions about this critical national issue.

Pascal D. Forgione, Jr.
Commissioner of Education Statistics

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many individuals made substantial contributions to the preparation of this report. This report was prepared under the direction of Paul Planchon, Associate Commissioner for Surveys and Cooperative Systems Group.

Special recognition is extended to Rosalind Bruno of the Education and Social Stratification Branch, Population Division, Bureau of the Census for her contributions to the preparations of the sections of the report based on the CPS data. Thanks also go to the staff at the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago for their work in the collection and preparation of the data from NELS:88.

Nabeel Alsalam and his staff at NCES provided assistance in formulating the definition of event dropouts applied to the CPS data. They also provided the family income data used in the reporting of the event and status rates in this report. Summer D. Whitener in the Surveys and Cooperative Systems Group at NCES also deserves special recognition for her assistance in coordinating and organizing the release and distribution of this document.

Without the assistance of Steve Klein, Stephanie Alamin-Cuccaro, Connie Yin, Laura Mihailoff, Dawn Cayayaba, and Karyn Madden of MPR Associates this report could not have been prepared. They provided invaluable analytical, editorial, graphic, and production assistance.

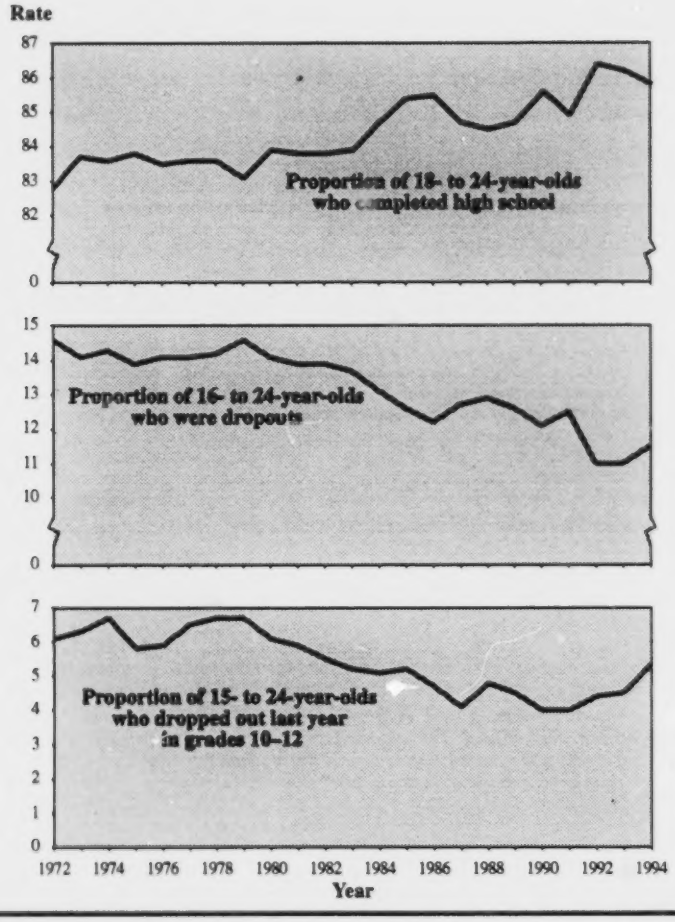
The report was reviewed by Mary Frase, Lee Hoffman, Robert Burton of NCES and Russell Rumberger of the University of California at Santa Barbara. Their efforts and contributions are greatly appreciated.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the seventh annual dropout report to Congress by the National Center for Education Statistics. It presents data for 1994 on high school dropout and retention rates along with time series data for the period from 1972 through 1994. In addition to data on the 1994 dropout rate, this report uses data from the third follow-up to the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) to examine post-high school transitions and experiences of the eighth-grade class of 1988 during the first two years after scheduled graduation. The experiences of this cohort of young people in navigating the pathways from adolescence to adulthood will hopefully enlighten and inform the current efforts at improving young people's transitions from school-to-work, school-to-school, and work-to-school.

The data shown in this report indicate that dropout rates have generally decreased over the last two decades and completion rates have increased. In 1972, data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) estimated that, of young adults under age 25, 6 percent dropped out of school that year, over 14 percent were dropouts, and about 83 percent of young adults ages 18 to 24 had completed high school with either a regular diploma or an equivalency certificate (like a GED). In 1993 the comparable figures were less than 5 percent, 11 percent, and over 86 percent (figure A).

Figure A—Proportion of 15- to 24-year-olds dropping out of grades 10 to 12, proportion of 16- to 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and proportion of 18- to 24-year-olds who completed high school: 1972 to 1994



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (Various Years).

In 1994, the US Census Bureau made improvements to the administration and methodology of the CPS resulting in a more accurate count of young people without diplomas. With this improvement in methods (and adjustments for populations shifts between 1980 and 1990) a more accurate estimate of these rates showed that true dropout rates were somewhat higher than had been estimated in the past. The new estimates were 5.3 percent of young people dropping out of school last year, 11.5 percent were dropouts and 85.8 percent had completed high school.

Table A—Data for Figure A: Proportion of 15- to 24-year-olds dropping out of grades 10 to 12, proportion of 16- to 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and proportion of 18- to 24-year-olds who completed high school: October 1972 to 1994

Year	Event rate: 15- to 24-year-olds dropouts grades 10 to 12	Status rate: 16- to 24-year-olds dropouts in age group	Completers age 18 to 24
1972	6.1	14.6	82.8
1973	6.3	14.1	83.7
1974	6.7	14.3	83.6
1975	5.8	13.9	83.8
1976	5.9	14.1	83.5
1977	6.5	14.1	83.6
1978	6.7	14.2	83.6
1979	6.7	14.6	83.1
1980	6.1	14.1	83.9
1981	5.9	13.9	83.8
1982	5.5	13.9	83.8
1983	5.2	13.7	83.9
1984	5.1	13.1	84.7
1985	5.2	12.6	85.4
1986	4.7	12.2	85.5
1987[1]	4.1	12.7	84.7
1988[1]	4.8	12.9	84.5
1989[1]	4.5	12.6	84.7
1990[1]	4.0	12.1	85.6
1991[1]	4.0	12.5	84.9
1992[1,2]	4.4	11.0	86.4
1993[1,2]	4.5	11.0	86.2
1994[1,2,3]	5.3	11.5	85.8

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (Various Years).

Other findings of this report show that:

- Close to one-half million students age 15- through 24-year-olds left school between October 1993 and October 1994

- Reflecting the accumulation of dropouts over the last few years, in October of 1994 there were 3.7 million 16- through 24-year-olds who had not completed high school and were not enrolled in school.

- This represented 11.5 percent of all 16- through 24-year-olds in 1994—down from a recent high of 14.6 percent in 1979.

- In general minority students were more likely than white students to have dropped out. Dropout rates were also higher for low income students and students in the Southern and in the Western regions of the country.

The second chapter of this report looks at what happened to dropouts from the eighth grade class of 1988 in the two years immediately following their scheduled graduation from high school in 1992. These findings from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) indicate that:

- By 1994, approximately 87 percent of the eighth-grade class of 1988 had completed high school by earning a diploma or an alternative credential.

- Those who did not earn a diploma were much less likely than high school graduates to enroll in postsecondary education; only about 7 percent were able to overcome this obstacle and enroll, compared with about 73 percent of high school graduates who enrolled in a postsecondary institution by the spring of 1994.

- Those with alternative credentials were also less likely than high school graduates to enroll in postsecondary education, with only 33 percent participating.

Overall the findings outlined in this report show that while dropout rates have remained fairly constant over the last decade, there still are severe consequences for not completing high school. In terms of employment, earnings, and family formation, dropouts from high school face difficulties in making the transition to the adult world.

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EVENT, STATUS, AND COHORT DROPOUT RATES

This seventh annual dropout report by the National Center for Education Statistics presents data on high school dropout and completion rates over the 1972 through 1994 time period. Data from the October 1994 Current Population Survey (CPS) of the U.S. Bureau of the Census are used to compute national dropout rates. These rates are examined for population subgroups defined by sex and race–ethnicity, as well as income levels, and regions of the country. In addition, NCES data from the Common Core of Data (CCD) are used to provide state estimates of dropout rates.

NCES longitudinal cohort studies provide the data for more detailed analyses of dropout rates for individual groups of students. In particular, the dropout experiences, reported reasons for dropping out, and resulting outcomes are reported for young adults who were in the eighth grade in 1988. Where data permit, the experiences of this recent cohort are compared to a cohort of students from 10 years earlier.

Data from the CPS are also used to compute high school graduation and completion rates. These rates are examined within racial and ethnic groups, and by state and region of the country.

Types of Dropout Rates

This report includes three alternative types of dropout rates—**event**, **status**, and **cohort** rates. Each one provides unique information about the student dropout population.

The **event** dropout rate provides a measure of recent dropout experiences. **Event** rates are important because they reveal the proportion of students who leave high school each year without completing a high school program.

The **status** dropout rate is a cumulative rate. It is much higher than the **event** rate because it includes all dropouts, regardless of when they last attended school. **Status** rates are important because they reveal the extent of the dropout problem in the population. This rate suggests the magnitude of the challenge for further training and education that will be needed if these dropouts are to participate fully in the economy and life of the nation.

The **cohort** dropout rate measures what happens to a single group, or cohort, of students over a period of time. This rate is based on repeated measures of a group of students with shared experiences. **cohort** rates are important because they reveal how many students starting in a specific grade drop out over time. In addition, **cohort** rates from longitudinal studies provide more background and contextual data on the students who drop out than are available through the CPS or CCD data collections.

Event Dropout Rates

In 1994, an estimated 5.3 percent of high school students dropped out of school (table 1).[1] Data from the October 1994 CPS show that there were 9.4 million 15- through 24-year-olds enrolled in grades 10–12 in October 1993 (see table C1). Close to one-half million of these students left school by October 1994 without completing a high school program.

Table 1—Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, and region: October 1994

Characteristics	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts
Total	5.3	94.7	497	100.0
Sex				
Male	5.2	94.8	249	50.1
Female	5.4	94.6	248	49.9
Race–ethnicity[1]				
White, non-Hispanic	4.2	95.8	274	55.1
Black, non-Hispanic	6.6	93.4	95	19.1
Hispanic	10.0	90.0	109	21.9
Family income[2]				
Low income level	13.0	87.0	155	31.2
Middle income level	5.2	94.8	288	57.9
High income level	2.1	98.0	54	10.9
Region				
Northeast	3.2	96.9	59	11.9
Midwest	4.9	95.1	113	22.7
South	6.8	93.2	214	43.1
West	5.4	94.6	110	22.1

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1994; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes. See the technical appendix to this report for a full definition of family income.

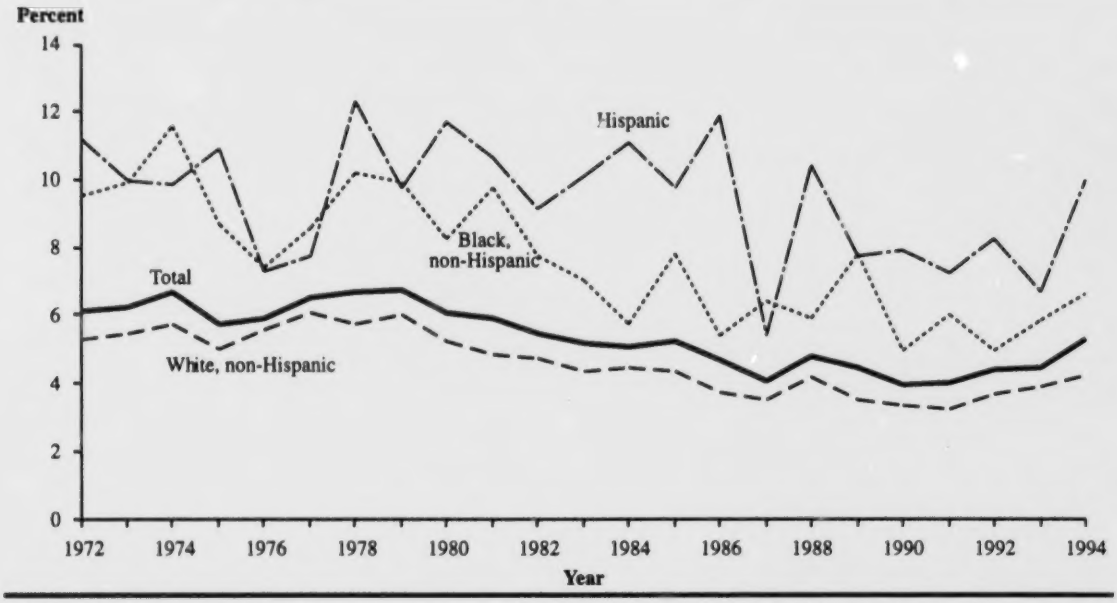
NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

[1]Standard errors for all tables and figures are provided in appendix A.

The 1994 **event** dropout rate is lower than the recorded high of 6.7 percent observed in 1974 and again in 1978 and 1979 (figure 1 and table A38).[2]

Figure 1—Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Race–Ethnicity and Age

A closer look at who is making this dropout decision shows that Hispanic students are more likely than white students to leave school during their high school years (10.0 percent versus 4.2 percent). While the rate for blacks (6.6 percent) appears to be intermediate to those for Hispanics and whites, the differences are not significant (table 1).

[2]The statistical significance of these comparisons was assessed with student's t-test with a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. For a full discussion of the statistical methods used in this report, see appendix B. While this year's event rate appears to be higher than the rates observed in recent years, the observed difference is most likely due to changes in Census methodology and does not represent a significant increase. For a detailed discussion in changes in CPS methodology, see appendix B.

Table 2—Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1994

Age	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (thousands)	Percent of all dropouts
Total	5.3	94.7	497	100.0
Age*				
15–16	2.7	97.4	70	14.1
17	3.1	96.9	101	20.3
18	6.9	93.1	177	35.6
19	12.4	87.6	79	15.9
20–24	23.1	76.9	71	14.3

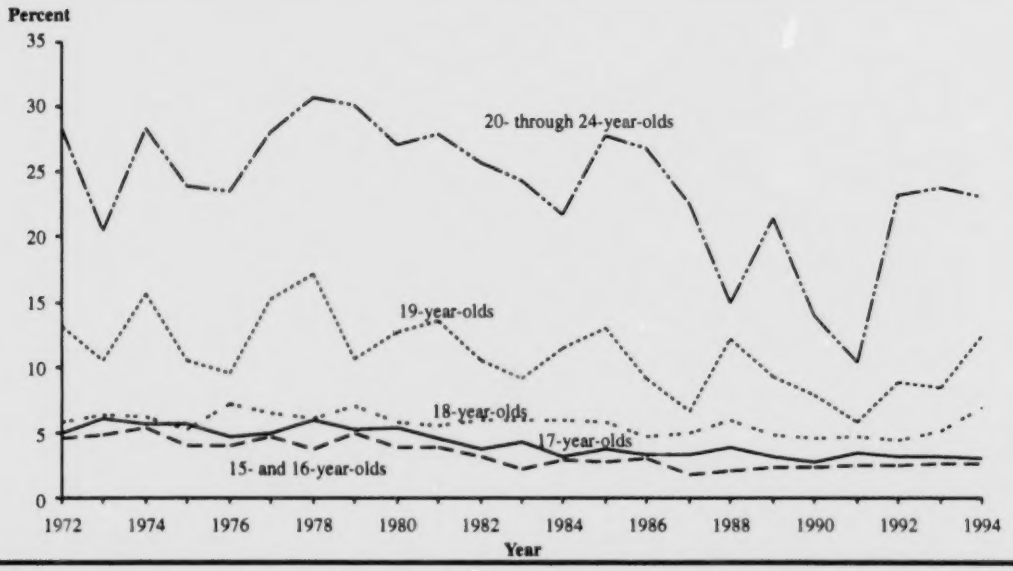
*Age when a person dropped out may be one year younger, because the dropout event could occur at any time over a 12-month period.

NOTE: Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Data for individual years of age show that among youth who are still enrolled in school the likelihood of leaving school increases with age, so that only about 3 percent of the enrolled 15–16, and 17-year-olds dropped out over the course of the year compared with 7 percent of the 18-year-olds and 12 percent of the 19-year-olds (figure 2 and tables 2 and A41).

Figure 2—Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1994



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

State dropout rates

NCES is in the process of developing a national database of public school district dropout rates as a component of the Common Core of Data (CCD) universe collection. When complete, **event** data for sex, race–ethnicity, and grade level for grades 7 through 12 will be collected at the school district level and aggregated and reported at the state and national levels.

There are currently 45 states plus the District of Columbia submitting dropout data to CCD; as of the 1993–94 school year, 17 states, and the District of Columbia, have data that meet quality and comparability levels needed to justify publishing estimates. For these 17 states, the midpoint of the ninth-to-twelfth grade dropout rate is 4.6 percent, with the rates ranging from 2.3 to 10.2 percent (table 3).

Table 3—Membership, dropout count and rate for grades 9-12, 1993-94

State	Dropout count	Membership	Dropout rate(%)
Arkansas	5,928	123,895	4.8
California	70,750	1,394,953	5.1
Connecticut	5,814	127,430	4.6
Delaware	1,187	28,338	4.2
District of Columbia	1,946	19,131	10.2
Kansas	5,604	122,568	4.6
Massachusetts	7,877	224,353	3.5
Mississippi	7,440	133,622	5.6
Missouri	14,756	236,606	6.2
Nebraska	3,010	78,558	3.8
Nevada	4,796	57,598	8.3
New Mexico	6,807	87,333	7.8
New York	29,009	754,695	3.8
North Dakota	759	33,397	2.3
Oregon	8,266	142,791	5.8
Pennsylvania	18,032	484,777	3.7
Rhode Island	1,772	38,830	4.6
Texas	38,796	892,673	4.3

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, universe collection, 1994.

Status Dropout Rates

This measure of high school **status** includes a count of all young adults who are not enrolled in a high school program and have not completed high school, regardless of when they last attended school. CPS data show that in October of 1994 there were 32.6 million 16- through 24-year-olds in the U.S., and 3.7 million of them were not enrolled in a high school program and reported having not completed high school (table 4 and C5). This amounts to a **status** dropout rate of 11.5 percent in October of 1994.[3]

Table 4—Rate and number of status dropouts, ages 16–24: October 1990 through October 1994

	October				
	1990	1991	1992[1]	1993[1]	1994[1,2]
Status dropout rate (percent)	12.1	12.5	11.0	11.0	11.5
Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	3,797	3,881	3,410	3,396	3,727
Population (in thousands)	31,443	31,171	30,944	30,845	32,560

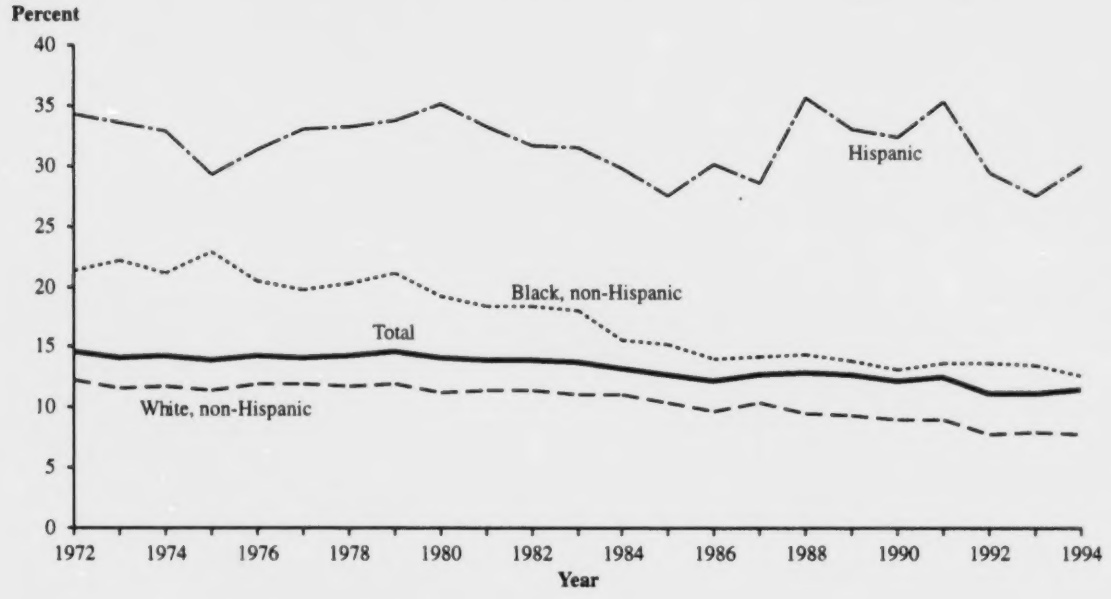
[1]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[2]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

[3]While this year's status rate appears to be higher than the rates observed in recent years, the observed difference is most likely due to changes in Census methodology and does not represent a significant increase.

The 1994 **status** rate represents a decline from the recorded high of 14.6 percent observed in 1972 and again in 1979 (figure 3 and table A43).[4]

Figure 3—Status dropout rates for persons aged 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Race–Ethnicity

Status dropout rates for whites and blacks show an overall pattern of decline, with 1994 rates of 7.7 percent for white, non-Hispanics and 12.6 percent for black, non-Hispanics (table 5). While the rates for blacks remain higher than those for whites, the gap is narrowing as the rates for blacks continue to decline at a more rapid pace.[5]

[4]The statistical significance of the trends presented in this section was assessed using weighted least squares regression. For a full discussion of the statistical methods used in this report, see appendix B.

[5]These findings are consistent with analyses reported by G. Natriello, A.M. Pallas, and E.L. McDill, "Taking Stock: Renewing our Research Agenda on the Causes and Consequences of Dropping Out," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989):168–178.

Table 5—Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, and region: October 1994

Characteristics	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Population (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	11.5	3,727	32,560	100.0	100.0
Sex					
Male	12.3	2,000	16,304	53.7	50.1
Female	10.6	1,727	16,257	46.3	49.9
Race–ethnicity[1]					
White, non-Hispanic	7.7	1,709	22,080	45.9	67.8
Black, non-Hispanic	12.6	607	4,805	16.3	14.8
Hispanic	30.0	1,322	4,411	35.5	13.5
Family income[2]					
Low income level	21.0	1,230	5,857	33.0	18.0
Middle income level	11.3	2,161	19,108	58.0	58.7
High income level	4.4	336	7,595	9.0	23.3
Region					
Northeast	8.6	531	6,150	14.2	18.9
Midwest	7.7	595	7,770	16.0	23.9
South	13.5	1,562	11,545	41.9	35.5
West	14.7	1,039	7,095	27.9	21.8

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1994; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

In contrast, the 1994 **status** dropout rate for Hispanics is 30.0 percent. The rates for this group show no consistent pattern of change over time, but persist at a level substantially higher than the rates observed for blacks and whites.[6]

[6]The erratic nature of the Hispanic status rate reflects, in part, the small sample size of Hispanics in the CPS. However, the finding of a higher dropout rate for Hispanics, compared with blacks and whites, is consistent with previous research reported by G.H. Brown, N.L. Rose, S.T. Hill, and M.A. Olivas, in the *Condition of Education for Hispanic Americans*, U.S. Department of Education (1980), as well as by R. W. Rumberger in "Dropping Out of High School: The Influence of Race, Sex, and Family Background," *American Educational Research Journal*

Not only do Hispanics have higher dropout rates than whites and blacks; but, on average, the amount of education they complete is lower.[7] Sixty-two percent of all Hispanic dropouts have less than a tenth-grade education, compared with 30 percent of white dropouts and 22 percent of black dropouts (table 6).[8]

Table 6—Percentage distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by level of schooling attained and race–ethnicity: October 1994

Level of schooling attained	Total	Race–ethnicity* White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Level of schooling attained				
Less than 1st grade	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.4
1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th grade	3.4	0.4	4.9	6.8
5th or 6th grade	8.3	1.0	1.8	21.2
7th or 8th grade	10.7	10.4	6.1	13.4
Less than 9th grade	23.9	13.5	14.2	42.7
9th grade	16.2	17.0	7.6	18.8
Less than 10th grade	40.1	30.4	21.7	61.6
10th grade	20.3	26.0	23.9	11.0
11th grade	28.9	33.5	38.7	18.2
12th grade, without diploma	10.6	9.9	15.7	9.1

*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

20 (1983): 199–220.

[7]Unfortunately, there are no available data for Hispanics on school enrollment status in the United States; thus it may be the case that a number of Hispanics in the 16–24 age range come to the United States for employment and never enter the U.S. education system.

[8]The patterns observed among non-Hispanics are consistent with the report that students are more likely to drop out after reaching grade nine. See E.L. McDill, G. Natriello, and A.M. Pallas, "A Population at Risk: Potential Consequences of Tougher School Standards for Student Dropouts," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989): 168–178.

Income Levels

Status dropout rates computed by family income levels show that the dropout rate is highest for persons at the lowest income levels.[9] For example, 21.0 percent of the young adults in families with incomes in the bottom 20 percent of the income distribution are out of school and have not completed a high school program. By comparison, 4.4 percent of the young adults with families in the top 20 percent of the income distribution are **status** dropouts, and for the remaining income levels (that is, the middle income group) the **status** dropout rate is 11.3 percent (table 7).

When race and income are considered together, the difference noted between the **status** dropout rates for whites and blacks does not occur in the middle and high income groups (table 7). The black-white disparity in **status** dropout rates is only evident among young adults in families with incomes in the lowest 20 percent of the income distribution.

Table 7—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income and race–ethnicity: October 1994

		Race–ethnicity[1]		
Family income	Total	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	11.5	7.7	12.6	30.0
Family income[2]				
Low income level	21.0	14.3	23.0	39.5
Middle income level	11.3	8.2	9.9	28.1
High income level	4.4	3.5	3.9	17.6

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1994; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

[9]The patterns observed in the dropout rates by income levels are consistent with previous analyses of dropout rates among young adults from varying socioeconomic levels. See R.B. Eckstrom, M.E. Goertz, J.M. Pollack, and D.A. Rock, "Who Drops Out of High School and Why? Findings from a National Study," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed G. Natriello (New York: Teachers College Press, 1989): 52–69; R.D. Mare, "Social Background and School Continuation Decisions," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 75 (1980): 295–305; J. Combs and W.W. Cooley, "Dropouts in High School and After School," *American Educational Research Journal* 5 (1986): 343–364; and R.W. Rumberger, *American Educational Research Journal* 20 (1983): 199–220.

Geographic Variation

The southern and western regions of the country have a disproportionally high share of young adults who have left high school without completing a high school program (tables 5, 8, and C7).[10] White, non-Hispanic young adults living in the southern region of the U.S. are more likely to have dropped out than whites in other regions of the country. Due in part to relatively small sample sizes, the **status** dropout rates for blacks are statistically consistent across the four major geographic regions of the country, and the same is true for Hispanic young adults.

Table 8—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region and race–ethnicity: October 1994

Region	Total	Race–ethnicity*		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	11.5	7.7	12.6	30.0
Region				
Northeast	8.6	6.2	12.6	22.8
Midwest	7.7	5.9	12.4	27.3
South	13.5	10.7	13.2	28.3
West	14.7	7.2	9.1	33.8

*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Despite the lack of regional differences within these two groups, Hispanics drop out at higher rates than blacks or whites in virtually all sections of the country. Furthermore, the geographic concentration of blacks in the South and Hispanics in the South and West contribute to higher **status** dropout rates in those two regions of the country (table 9).

[10]These findings are corroborated in research reported by G. Stice and R.B. Eckstrom, *High School Attrition, Research Bulletin*, No RB-64-53 (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1964); R.B. Eckstrom, M.E. Goertz, J.M. Pollack, and D.A. Rock, in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*: 52–69; and R. Calitri, *Minority Secondary Education in New York* (New York, NY: Aspiria of New York, Inc., 1983).

Table 9—Population distribution, ages 16–24, by region and race–ethnicity: October 1994

Region	Total	Race–ethnicity* White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Region Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Region				
Northeast	18.9	20.6	16.5	13.5
Midwest	23.9	28.9	18.1	7.5
South	35.5	31.8	57.6	33.8
West	21.8	18.7	7.8	45.2

*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Cohort Dropout Rates

Longitudinal studies follow the experiences that a **cohort** of students share as they progress through school. Longitudinal studies can lead to an increased understanding of high school dropouts by providing an opportunity to examine in more detail questions about who drops out, the life circumstances of dropouts, the factors that influence the decision to drop out of high school, and the experiences young adults have after leaving school. In the 1987–88 school year, NCES initiated the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS:88) of the cohort of students enrolled in eighth grade. Following the 1988 base year data collection, these students were re-interviewed every two years through 1994. Analysis of the enrollment and grade and program completion status of these students provides a foundation for studying their progress through the educational system.

The **cohort** dropout rates for the eighth-grade class of 1988 show that 6.8 percent of the eighth graders in 1988 dropped out of school between the spring of 1988 and the spring of 1990 (table 10).[11] Furthermore 7.6 percent of the 1988 eighth graders who were enrolled in the spring of 1990 dropped out between 1990 and the spring of 1992, and by the spring of 1992, 11.6 percent of the 1988 cohort of eighth graders were out of school and had not completed a high school program.

[11]This section of the analysis is based on the fully expanded cohort of eighth graders. This sample includes students excluded in the base year sample, whose sex, race, and dropout status were determined through the Followback Study of Excluded Students.

Table 10—NELS:88 8th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1992

Characteristics	Cohort dropout rate			
	Spring 1988–90	Spring 1990–92[1]	Spring 1988–92	August 1992
Total	6.8	7.6	11.6	11.0
Sex				
Male	7.2	7.6	11.6	11.2
Female	6.5	7.6	11.6	10.8
Race–ethnicity[2]				
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.0	5.5	7.0	6.5
Hispanic	9.6	12.7	18.3	17.8
Black, non-Hispanic	10.2	9.6	14.5	14.1
White, non-Hispanic	5.2	6.1	9.4	8.8
Native American	9.2	19.9	25.4	25.4

[1]The denominator for this rate includes the members of the 1988 eighth-grade cohort who were still enrolled in school in the spring of 1990; excluded are students who dropped out between 1988 and 1990 and students who migrated out of the country or died.
[2]Not shown separately are 434 persons (approximately 2 percent of the unweighted sample) whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: This table is based on the fully expanded cohort of eighth graders. This sample includes students excluded in the base year sample, whose sex, race, and dropout status were determined through the Followback Study of Excluded Students.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Base-Year, First, and Second Followup Survey, 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994, unpublished data.

These young adults were re-interviewed in 1994 and information from those interviews, sometimes taken in combination with their high school transcripts, show through re-enrollments and alternative credentialing programs, the size of this group was reduced to 11.0 percent by the summer of 1992.[12] A total of 80.9 percent of the 8th grade of 1988 had completed a regular high school program by the end of the summer of 1992, 2.5 percent completed an alternative credential, 0.1 percent received a certificate of attendance (not shown), and 5.5 percent were still enrolled in a high school program of some type (table 11).

[12]A completion date of August 1992 was chosen so as to be consistent with the definition of high school completion used by the Common Core of Data and the Current Population Survey.

Table 11—NELS:88 eighth grade cohort dropout rates and completion status, by sex and race–ethnicity: August 1992[1]

	Status August 1992			
	High school graduates	Received alternative credential	Still enrolled in high school[2]	Dropouts
Total	80.9	2.5	5.5	11.0
Sex				
Male	79.8	2.9	6.0	11.2
Female	82.0	2.1	4.9	10.8
Race–ethnicity[3]				
Asian/Pacific Islander	90.3	—	2.7	6.5
Hispanic	73.3	2.3	6.4	17.8
Black, non-Hispanic	71.9	2.8	11.1	14.1
White, non-Hispanic	84.2	2.6	4.4	8.8
Native American	61.3	—	6.8	25.4

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.
[1]Table does not include individuals who received a certificate of attendance (less than one-tenth of one percent of students).
[2]Includes those enrolled in regular high school and in alternative programs.
[3]Not shown separately are 434 persons (approximately 2 percent of the unweighted sample) whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: This table is based on the fully expanded cohort of eighth graders. This sample includes students excluded in the base year sample, whose sex, race, and dropout status were determined through the Followback Study of Excluded Students.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Base-Year, First, and Second Followup Survey and 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994, unpublished data.

When sex and race–ethnicity are taken into account, the data show that male and female students are equally likely to leave school, regardless of the grade intervals considered. And, racial and ethnic differences persist—in general, the dropout rates for Hispanics and blacks are higher than those for whites and Asians.

Longitudinal studies that are conducted on different cohorts of students enrich our understanding even further. In 1980, the High School and Beyond (HS&B) study included a nationally representative sample of sophomores; after initial interviews in 1980, these students were re-interviewed in 1982, 1984, 1986, and 1992.[13] More recently, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) included a nationally representative sample of sophomores

[13]See M. Frase, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1988*, NCES 89-609, for a full discussion of the cohort dropout rate from the High School and Beyond study.

in 1990 in addition to the nationally representative sample of eighth graders; these students were re-interviewed in 1992 and 1994.

A comparison of **cohort** dropout rates from the 1980 and 1990 *sophomore* classes shows that 9.9 percent of the students who were sophomores in 1980 were high school dropouts by August of the 1981–82 school year (table 12).[14] For the sophomore class of 1990, the **cohort** dropout rate was lower, with 5.6 percent of the students who were sophomores in 1990 counted as dropouts by August of the 1991–92 school year. This amounts to a 43 percent reduction in the sophomore to senior dropout rate over the decade.[15]

The **cohort** dropout rates improved for both male and female students, as well as for white, black, and Hispanic students. In 1982 and 1992, dropout rates were lowest for students living with both of their parents; but the dropout rates did decrease for all students, regardless of whether both parents were present in their home. In 1992 about 18 percent of the female students with a child at home dropped out of high school and although this number was apparently less than the 33 percent in 1982, the difference was not significant.

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[14]Previous analyses of HS&B data from the spring 1982 followup counted students who had enrolled in alternative programs to prepare for a high school equivalency test or who had completed high school by an alternative means as dropouts. See S.M. Barro and A. Kolstad, *Who Drops Out of High School? Findings from High School and Beyond* (1987); and A. Pallas, "School Dropouts in the United States," Issue Paper, U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics (1987). The analysis presented here treats them as students or completers.

[15]In both HS&B and NELS:88, a subset of students who were not considered capable of completing the questionnaire were deemed ineligible for participation in the study. Inasmuch as no attempt was made to identify and include data from students deemed ineligible in the 1980 HS&B cohort, analyses that compare NELS:88 sophomores with HS&B sophomores do not include data reflecting the experiences of the ineligible students in NELS:88. The option for the school coordinators to determine some students ineligible led to the exclusion of an unknown number of language minority (LM) and limited English proficient (LEP) students in HS&B. In NELS:88 however, a Spanish language questionnaire was administered to those members of the sophomore cohort who preferred to take this version of the questionnaire.

Table 12—HS&B and NELS:88 10th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by demographic characteristics: August 1982 and 1992

Status in 10th grade	Cohort dropout rate	
	HS&B[1] 1980–82	NELS:88 1990–92
Total	9.9	5.6
Sex		
Male	11.0	5.2
Female	9.0	6.0
Race–ethnicity[2]		
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.2	4.6
Hispanic	16.8	10.9
Black, non-Hispanic	11.3	7.6
White, non-Hispanic	8.8	4.3
Native American	25.1	18.2
Family below poverty level		
Yes	13.0	10.9
No	6.1	3.6
Family composition		
Intact family	5.5	4.2
Two adults/step-parents	12.9	7.9
Single parent	11.0	7.4
Other	19.8	10.4
Own child in home		
Yes		
Male	19.4	6.8
Female	33.0	18.3
No		
Male	8.3	5.1
Female	7.0	5.5

[1]Rates for HS&B are revised from previously published data.
[2]Not shown separately are those included in the total whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: See the technical appendix for the definitions of poverty and family composition used in these tables.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Study, Sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

In both 1982 and 1992, dropouts cited failing grades and a dislike for school as important factors in their decisions to leave school.[16,17] (table 13) Especially for female dropouts, pregnancy was a significant contributing factor. Marriage was also a key factor in 1982 but not as much in 1992, as the percentage of female dropouts who reported leaving school because of marriage declined. In order to better understand the success, and unfortunately in some cases failure, that young adults experience in today's society, the analysis included in this year's report focuses on some of the activities and outcomes experienced by the 1988 eighth grade cohort.

Table 13—Percentage of HS&B 1980 and NELS:88 sophomore cohort dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1982 and 1992

Reasons for dropping out	HS&B 1982			NELS:88 1992		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
School-related:						
Did not like school	30.0	30.2	28.5	42.9	43.6	42.2
Could not get along with teachers	15.4	19.2	10.9	22.8	24.6	21.1
Could not get along with students	6.4	6.3	6.5	14.5	17.7	11.6
Was suspended/expelled from school	10.7	16.1	4.5	15.5	21.6	10.0
Had poor grades/was failing school[1]	31.4	35.0	27.1	38.7	43.4	34.5
Family-related:						
Was pregnant[2]	22.9	—	22.9	26.8	—	26.8
Got married	19.9	7.3	34.7	12.1	3.7	19.7

—Not applicable.
[1]In the NELS:88 survey the wording of this item was changed to "was failing in school."
[2] Females only.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond study, sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

[16]Analyses of earlier data from HS&B and from the National Longitudinal Survey—Labor Force Experience in Youth Cohort (NLS—Youth) provide additional evidence of the role of school-related problems, work decisions, and family status in students' decisions to leave school early. See, for example, D. Mann, "Can We Help Dropouts? Thinking About the Undoable," in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, ed. G. Natriello (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989): 3–19; G.G. Wehlage and R.R. Rutter, in *School Dropouts: Patterns and Policies*, 70–88; R.W. Rumberger, *American Educational Research Journal* 20 (1983): 199–220; R.W. Rumberger, "High School Dropouts: A Review of Issues and Evidence," *Review of Educational Research* 57 (1987): 107–121; and S.M. Barro and A. Kolstad, *Who Drops Out of High School: Findings from High School and Beyond*, U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics (1987).

[17]Since students identified all reasons contributing to their dropout decision, changes in the percentage reporting an individual item or any group of items does not necessarily reflect a change in the dropout rates. More than likely the increases here reflect that individual students report more reasons as contributing factors.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES

Much of the interest in measuring dropouts stems from a concern over how well prepared young adults are for entry into the work force. As the emphasis on skilled labor and technology increases in the work place, a high school education serves more and more as a minimum requirement for entry into the labor force. This then leads to interest in a measure of the number of young adults who have **completed** a high school program.

Graduation and Completion Rates

The majority of young adults complete the required secondary school coursework and **graduate** with a regular high school diploma. Strictly speaking, a high school graduation rate is based on students receiving regular high school diplomas. In 1994, 79.4 percent of the young adults ages 18 through 24, who were not still enrolled in a high school program, were **graduates** holding regular high school diplomas (table 14).

Table 14—High school completion rates and method of completion of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race–ethnicity[1]: October 1990 through October 1994

Completion method	Year				
	1990	1991	1992[2]	1993[2]	1994[2,3]
	(percent)				
Total					
Completed	85.6	84.9	86.4	86.2	85.8
Diploma	81.0	80.9	81.5	81.3	79.4
Alternative	4.6	4.0	4.9	4.9	6.4
White, non-Hispanic					
Completed	89.6	89.4	90.7	90.1	90.7
Diploma	85.0	85.2	85.7	85.4	84.6
Alternative	4.6	4.2	5.0	4.7	6.1
Black, non-Hispanic					
Completed	83.2	82.5	82.0	81.9	83.3
Diploma	78.0	77.4	76.8	75.9	75.7
Alternative	5.2	5.1	5.2	6.0	7.6
Hispanic					
Completed	59.1	56.5	62.1	64.4	61.8
Diploma	56.5	54.4	58.0	58.5	56.5
Alternative	2.6	2.1	4.1	5.9	5.3

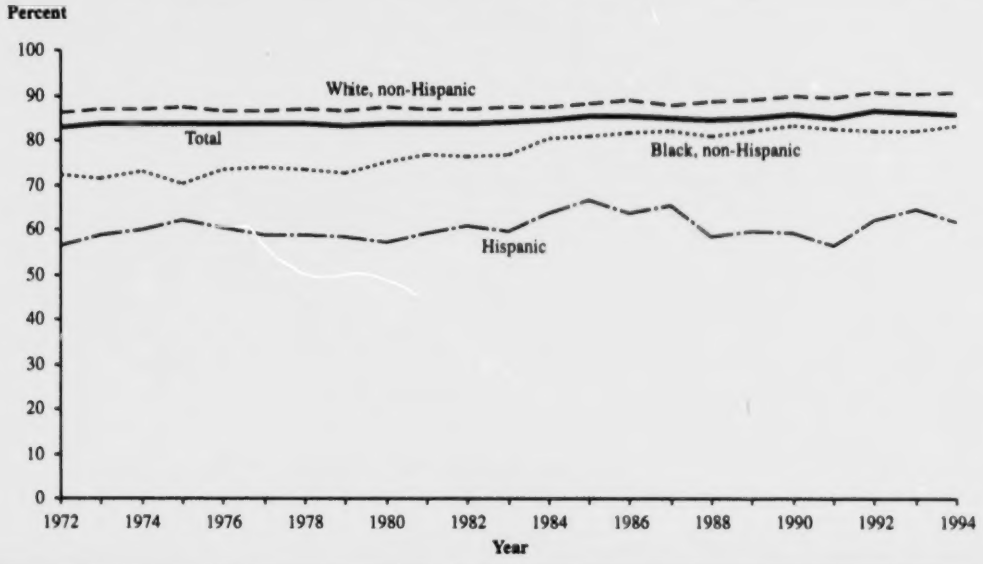
[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Other young adults **complete** their high school education by successfully passing an exam, such as the General Educational Development (GED), required for an alternative credential. The size of this group is relatively small; in 1994, 6.4 percent of the 18- through 24-year-olds who were not still enrolled in a high school program reported holding an alternative certificate.

The high school **completion** rate combines these recipients of alternative certificates along with students graduating with regular high school diplomas, to provide a measure of the young adults who have **completed** a high school program and are ready to enter the labor force or move on to a postsecondary educational program. In 1994, 85.8 percent of the young adults ages 18 through 24, who were not still enrolled in a high school program, held a high school credential. This rate measures the high school completion **status** of young adults, regardless of the year of high school completion.[18] Over the last 18 years the completion rate has increased. The 1994 high school **status** completion rate is higher than the recorded lows of 82.8 observed in 1972 and of 83.1 observed in 1979 (figure 4 and table A45).

Figure 4—High school completion rates for all 18- through 24-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

[18]An event graduation rate compares the number of students who graduate at the end of a school year (or the following summer) to the number of students potentially eligible to graduate at the start of the year. Data from the NCES 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) show an event graduation rate of 93 percent for seniors in the spring of 1993. A cohort graduation rate compares the number of students who graduate to the number of students present at the start of the study. Data from NELS:88 expanded cohort show that 80.9 percent of the eighth-grade cohort graduated by the summer of 1992, and an additional 2.5 percent completed an alternative program, for a 1992 cohort completion rate of 83.4 percent.

The high school completion rates of whites have been consistently higher than those for blacks, with 90.7 percent of the white 18- through 24-year-olds reported as completing high school by 1994, compared to 83.3 percent of black 18- through 24-year-olds (table 15). However, while white completion rates are still higher than black rates, the gap between black and white completion rates narrowed over time. The high school completion rate for Hispanic 18- through 24-year-olds is even lower, at 61.8 percent.

Table 15—Completion rates and number and distribution of completers, ages 18 through 24 years old, by sex, race–ethnicity, and region: October 1994

	Completion rate (percent)	Number of completers (thousands)	Percent of all completers
Total	85.8	20,538	100.0
Sex			
Male	84.5	9,949	49.2
Female	87.0	10,589	50.8
Race–ethnicity*			
White, non-Hispanic	90.7	14,889	68.6
Black, non-Hispanic	83.3	2,785	14.0
Hispanic	61.8	1,985	13.4
Region			
Northeast	89.6	4,040	18.8
Midwest	90.9	5,225	24.0
South	83.1	7,031	35.7
West	81.2	4,243	21.8

*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Consistent with the geographic patterns observed in the **status** dropout rates, the high school completion rates are lower in the South and West than they are in the Northeast and Midwest.

Completion Rates by State

A review of completion rates computed for individual states (table 16) shows a 17.7 percentage point spread between the highest and lowest observed estimates. In particular, the rates range from 78.9 percent in California and 79.4 percent in Georgia to 95.9 percent in Nebraska and 96.6 percent in North Dakota.[19]

These completion rates reflect the experiences of all 18- through 24-year-olds living in each state at the time of the October data collection. Although dependent students are included in their parent's household, not their school residence, some young adults move from one state to another to seek employment. This should be taken into account in evaluating the rates for individual states.

[19]The sample sizes of the numbers of completers at the state level are, by definition, substantially smaller than the counts of completers supporting the national estimates (but appreciably larger than the counts of dropouts). To improve the stability of the state level estimates for high school completion rates, the rates are displayed as three year moving averages (for example, the data for 1990 represent the average of the data from 1989, 1990, and 1991 and the data for 1993 are based on averages of data from 1992, 1993, and 1994).

Table 16—High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds, by state, October 1989–91 and 1992–94[1]

State	1989-91	1992-94
Total	85.0	86.1
Alaska	88.7	89.8
Alabama	82.2	83.3
Arkansas	87.1	87.5
Arizona	83.2	83.7
California	76.7	78.9
Colorado	87.8	87.6
Connecticut	89.7	92.6
Washington, D.C.	82.0	86.4
Delaware	85.9	93.7
Florida	83.2	83.2
Georgia	85.5	79.4
Hawaii	92.9	90.7
Iowa	94.5	94.2
Idaho	83.1	86.7
Illinois	85.4	86.7
Indiana	88.9	88.4
Kansas	92.5	92.2
Kentucky	81.6	83.3
Louisiana	80.6	83.9
Massachusetts	89.6	91.2
Maryland	87.3	92.9
Maine	90.5	94.0
Michigan	86.3	89.2
Minnesota	92.0	93.2
Missouri	88.0	90.0
Mississippi	84.0	88.8
Montana	92.7	91.6
North Carolina	82.8	85.3
North Dakota	95.6	96.6
Nebraska	90.8	95.9
New Hampshire	87.3	86.6
New Jersey	90.0	91.0
New Mexico	84.7	83.7
Nevada	82.6	83.4
New York	87.7	87.5
Ohio	89.3	89.6
Oklahoma	87.1	83.1
Oregon	89.2	82.9
Pennsylvania	90.2	89.7
Rhode Island	87.4	90.7
South Carolina	82.6	87.0
South Dakota	87.6	93.2
Tennessee	76.5	82.3
Texas	78.4	80.5
Utah	93.9	93.9
Virginia	87.0	88.6
Vermont	85.9	89.8
Washington	87.4	87.3
Wisconsin	93.4	93.4
West Virginia	82.7	85.6
Wyoming	91.4	91.6

[1]Numbers on this table reflect 3-year averages.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Summary

Overall, **status** dropout rates have declined and high school completion rates have increased since the early 1970s. But it is still the case that in 1994 Hispanic students were more likely to be dropouts and less likely to complete high school than black students; and black students were more likely to be dropouts and less likely to complete high school than white students. Regional differences, which are influenced by the racial differences, show higher dropout rates and lower high school completion rates in the South and West.

Despite these relative differences, in absolute terms the largest numbers of **status** dropouts are white (45.9 percent) and live in families with middle incomes (58.0 percent). In addition, nearly one-third (30.2 percent) of all dropouts live in either the northeast or midwestern regions of the country.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AND LIFE EXPERIENCES

The decisions that are made during and soon after high school affect the life course of each individual. During these years students make judgments that will affect how they will pass from adolescence to adulthood. Social scientists have long known that the timing and sequencing of these early transitions have a profound effect on the lives of these young people.[20] The traditional sequence is 1) complete school, 2) go to work, and 3) get married and raise children.[21] Completion of high school is the first critical step in this sequence. Those who do not complete this step face difficulties in making successful steps in the transition to adult life.[22] Different paths to adulthood may result in different consequences in adulthood.

Over the two-year period from 1992 to 1994, members of the eighth-grade class of 1988 (NELS:88) followed different paths as they entered adulthood: a number of them enrolled in postsecondary education programs, some of them either completed or enrolled in GED or other alternative certification programs, a number of young adults entered the labor force and became wage earners, some of them married, and some had children.

This analysis examines the immediate outcomes of different methods of high school completion on the life course events of young adults, with a consideration of whether there are differences between males and females or students with different racial or ethnic identities or different socioeconomic backgrounds.[23] Examined first are differences in high school completion status, followed by an examination of differences in the subsequent experiences of these young adults.[24]

High School Completion

While there may be many pathways to adulthood in the United States, the first step is almost always completion of high school. In August 1992, 84 percent of the eighth grade class of 1988 had completed high school—most with a high school diploma (table 17). Two years later, about 50 percent of those still enrolled in high school at the end of the summer in 1992 had completed high school by earning a diploma or receiving a GED. About 19 percent of dropouts in August 1992 completed while another 31 percent were re-enrolled in a program leading to high school completion.

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[20] For a review of this research see A. Pallas, "Schooling in the Course of Human Lives: The Social Context of Education and the Transition to Adulthood in Industrial Society," *Review of Educational Research* 20 (Winter, 1993).

[21] See M.M. Marini, "Age and Sequencing Norms in the Transition to Adulthood," *Social Forces* 63, (1984) for a critique of the utility of social norms in discussing adult pathways.

[22] R.R. Rindfuss, C.G. Swicegood, and R.A. Rosenfeld, "Disorder in the Life Course: How Common and Does it Matter?" *American Sociological Review* 94 (1987).

[23] The analysis in this section of the report is based on the third follow-up survey data from NELS:88. The third follow-up subsampled the full sample from earlier NELS:88 base year and follow-up surveys. Young people who were ineligible for all waves of the survey were not sampled. Therefore the estimates reported here are slightly different than those based on the fully expanded sample of students used in the previous section.

[24] Pallas (1993) calls attention to our lack of good information on the racial-ethnic and social class differences in patterns in the life course.

Table 17—Completion status of eighth grade class of 1988, August 1992 and spring 1994

Completion status Spring 1994	Completion status August 1992		
	Completed	Enrolled	Dropout
Total	84.1	7.8	8.2
Received a high school diploma	96.7	29.2	9.2
Received a GED	3.2	20.0	10.2
Received a certificate of attendance	0.1	0.2	0.2
Currently in high school	—	3.5	1.0
Working towards an equivalency	—	23.4	30.3
Dropout	—	23.1	49.2

—Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Consequently, by 1994, approximately 87 percent of the 1988 cohort of eighth graders had made the first step to adulthood and had completed high school or an equivalency program (81 percent and 6 percent, respectively). An additional 5 percent reported continuing work towards high school completion. The remaining 7 percent were dropouts—they had not completed high school and were not working towards completion (table 18).

Table 18—Percentage of NELS:88 eighth graders by high school completion status, by race–ethnicity, sex, and socioeconomic status: 1994

	High school graduates	Received alternative credential	Still enrolled in high school	Dropouts
Total	81.3	6.2	5.3	7.2
Race–ethnicity				
Asian/Pacific Islander	91.3	1.4	2.2	5.1
Hispanic	72.7	5.9	7.1	14.3
Black, non-Hispanic	71.8	10.5	9.3	8.4
White, non-Hispanic	84.4	5.5	4.3	5.7
Native American	61.7	10.2	11.2	16.9
Sex				
Male	80.2	7.1	5.1	7.5
Female	82.4	5.2	5.5	6.9
Socioeconomic status				
Low SES	64.9	7.9	9.6	17.7
Middle SES	83.7	6.3	5.0	5.0
High SES	93.6	4.0	1.5	0.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

These patterns do not vary appreciably between male and female youth[25], but there are some differences between racial and ethnic groups[26] and between youth from different socioeconomic backgrounds. In particular, 84 and 91 percent of the white and Asian youth received regular diplomas, compared with about 72 percent of black, 73 percent of Hispanic, and 62 percent of Native American youth. When GED or other alternative certifications are taken into account, about 90 percent of white and Asian youth and about 80 percent of black and Hispanic, and 72 percent of Native American youth have completed a high school program. In addition, the percentage of youth who completed a high school program increases from 73 percent at the lowest socioeconomic level to 90 percent at the middle level and to 98 percent at the highest level. Conversely, the percentage still enrolled and the percentage who are dropouts decreases

[25]Males are slightly more likely to receive an alternative credential, but this result is not statistically significant.

[26]In NELS:88, a subset of students who were not considered capable of completing the questionnaire were deemed ineligible for participation in the study. The option for the school coordinators to determine some students ineligible led to the exclusion of an unknown number of language minority (LM) and limited English proficient (LEP) students in HS&B. In NELS:88 however, a Spanish language questionnaire was administered in 1990 to those participants who preferred to take this version of the questionnaire.

as the socioeconomic level increases. While 10 percent of the youth in the lowest socioeconomic group were still enrolled, 18 percent are dropouts. The 10 percent at the middle and 2 percent at the highest socioeconomic levels who have not completed a high school program are evenly divided between those still enrolled and those who are dropouts.

Postsecondary Program Participation

The next step in the transition to adulthood for the majority of high school graduates is immediate entry into some sort of postsecondary education or training. Over a decade ago, in 1980, approximately one-half of high school completers went immediately into college (49.3 percent), while in 1990 almost 61 percent had done so.[27] Not all students go immediately into a postsecondary program, but three-quarters of the young adults in the eighth grade cohort of 1988 who completed high school with a regular diploma participated in a postsecondary education program[28] at some point between 1992 and 1994 (73 percent), and the majority of high school graduates were in degree programs (56 percent) (table 19).

Table 19—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by postsecondary enrollment status, by high school completion status, spring 1994*

	No post-secondary education	Enrolled in degree program	Certified or enrolled in certificate program	Other enrollment
Total	37.4	46.4	8.4	7.8
High school completion status				
High school graduate	26.7	55.8	8.8	8.7
GED/certificate	67.2	15.9	10.5	6.4
Enrolled	89.4	1.7	5.5	3.5
Dropout	93.5	0.5	3.8	2.2

*Postsecondary enrollment includes enrollment in degree granting programs, certificate programs, and programs not leading to a certificate or degree.

NOTE: All postsecondary enrollment between Spring 1992 and Spring 1994 were included. For those students who had enrolled in more than one type of program, the highest level of education is indicated.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

In the short term, at least, compared to high school graduates, relatively fewer of the students who pursued an alternative path to high school completion by getting an alternative

[27] These figures refer to enrollment of high school graduates in October following their high school graduation. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Condition of Education 1994*, Indicator 9.

[28] Postsecondary enrollment includes enrollment in degree granting programs, certificate programs, and programs not leading to a certificate or degree.

credential participated in any postsecondary education programs—only one-third of these students participated in any postsecondary education program (33 percent). In the past these GED recipients have purportedly not enjoyed the postsecondary success of their peers who held regular diplomas.[29] Nevertheless, about one-half of the GED recipients in the eighth-grade class of 1988 who enrolled in postsecondary education were in degree programs (about 16 percent of the GED recipients).

Of those 1988 eighth graders who did not complete high school by 1994, only about 10 percent went on to some form of postsecondary education (table 19). About 7 percent of the dropouts and 11 percent of those still working towards high school completion reported some postsecondary education by 1994. And, the postsecondary participation of young adults without a high school credential was primarily limited to non-degree licensing and certification programs although differences were not significant. This limitation makes sense given that many of these types of non-degree programs have GED preparation as a preliminary step towards certification or licensure.[30]

In the vast majority of cases, failure to complete high school precludes students making the transition to postsecondary education. Most, but not all, of those who fail to complete school will have to delay any postsecondary education until they achieve this milestone. Furthermore, a delay in making this transition has consequences for later success in that delayed entry appears to carry with it a low likelihood of eventual completion of postsecondary education.[31] Students who start postsecondary education immediately after high school are more likely to complete a bachelor's degree than are students who delayed entry by only a year.

Black, Hispanic, and Native American young adults were less likely to enroll in postsecondary education programs than white and Asian youths (table 20). Most of the variability occurs among regular high school diploma recipients without any postsecondary participation, varying from 51 percent to 14 percent, depending on race or ethnic group membership. In contrast, within each race–ethnicity group about two-thirds of the GED recipients and about 90 percent of dropouts and those still working towards high school completion did not participate in postsecondary education programs.

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[29] L. Quinn and M. Haberman, "Are GED Certificate Holders Ready for Postsecondary Education?" *Metropolitan Education*, and S.V. Cameron and J.J. Heckman, "The Non-Equivalence of High School Equivalents," *Journal of Labor Economics* 11(1): 1-47 (1993).

[30] W.N. Grubb, J. Kalman, M. Castello, C. Brown, and D. Bradby, *Readin',Writin', and 'Rithmetic One More Time: The Role of Remediation in Vocational Education and Job Training Programs*, National Center for Research in Vocational Education, September 1991.

[31] J. Tuma and S. Geis, *Educational Attainment of 1980 High School Sophomores by 1992*, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, (March 1995); U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *College Persistence and Degree Attainment for the 1980 High School Graduates: Hazards for Transfers, Stopouts, and Part-timers* (Washington DC, 1989).

Table 20—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders never enrolled in postsecondary education by race–ethnicity, by high school completion status, spring 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Total	37.4	19.7	48.9	47.3	34.1	66.4
High school completion status						
High school graduate	26.7	14.2	33.1	33.6	25.2	51.2
GED/certificate	67.2	—	67.5	73.9	65.4	—
Still enrolled	89.4	—	95.0	94.4	86.2	—
Dropout	93.5	—	98.1	77.1	96.1	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

The difference in postsecondary enrollment patterns between regular high school graduates and those who did not complete a regular high school diploma is repeated when socioeconomic background is taken into account (table 21). Again, the most variation in postsecondary program participation occurs among regular high school diploma recipients; within this group, those in the lower socioeconomic group are less likely to enroll in postsecondary programs than students at higher socioeconomic levels and this pattern is repeated within each race–ethnicity group.[32] Regardless of socioeconomic status, young adults who did not complete a regular high school diploma are far less likely to participate in postsecondary education.

[32] With the exception of Asians.

Table 21—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders never enrolled in postsecondary education by race–ethnicity, by socioeconomic status and high school completion status, fall 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Total	37.4	19.7	48.9	47.3	34.0	66.4
High school completion status						
High school graduate	26.7	14.2	33.1	33.6	25.2	51.2
GED/certificate	67.2	—	67.5	73.9	65.4	—
Other	91.8	86.4	97.1	86.2	91.9	97.6
Low SES	64.2	22.6	59.7	57.0	70.2	87.1
High school graduates	50.1	15.7	43.2	42.3	57.8	80.0
GED/certificate	73.6	—	73.2	70.6	74.3	—
Other	94.8	—	96.5	89.8	96.2	—
Middle SES	37.1	25.3	41.0	43.0	35.8	53.0
High school graduates	28.6	17.7	28.4	33.7	28.2	35.3
GED/certificate	66.7	—	63.7	62.3	68.3	—
Other	89.4	—	97.8	80.3	90.0	—
High SES	11.7	7.1	10.1	33.6	10.3	—
High school graduates	8.0	6.8	8.2	10.3	7.9	—
GED/certificate	58.6	—	—	—	35.9	—
Other	76.9	—	—	—	75.4	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Low postsecondary enrollment rates are shared by young males and females who do not complete a regular high school program (table 22). The relatively small sex difference apparent in the aggregate is due to differences in enrollment patterns among high school diploma recipients in the lowest and middle socioeconomic groups.

Table 22—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders never enrolled in postsecondary education by sex, by socioeconomic status and high school completion status, fall 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Total	37.4	40.5	34.3
High school completion status			
High school graduate	26.7	30.1	23.4
GED/certificate	67.2	69.1	64.6
Other	91.8	90.1	93.4
Low SES	64.2	68.9	59.9
High school graduates	50.1	55.3	45.8
GED/certificate	73.6	76.2	70.1
Other	94.8	94.9	94.8
Middle SES	37.1	41.7	32.3
High school graduates	28.6	34.2	23.1
GED/certificate	66.7	66.1	67.3
Other	89.4	86.7	92.2
High SES	11.7	13.2	10.0
High school graduates	8.0	8.8	7.1
GED/certificate	58.6	65.7	44.9
Other	76.9	72.1	82.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Employment and Postsecondary Enrollments

While the pattern of school–work–marriage may once have described the "normal" sequencing of events on the path to adulthood, this ordering clearly does not describe the life course of many young people today. More young adults combine the roles of student and worker than ever before. For example, researchers using the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth Labor Market Experiences (NLSY) found that only 49 percent of undergraduate students worked in 1979 compared with 67 percent in 1986.[33] More recently, research using the 1989–90 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:90) found that among undergraduates, approximately 75 percent reported working at some time during the academic year 1989–90.[34]

[33] D. Stern and Y. Nakata, "Paid Employment among U.S. College Undergraduates," *Journal of Higher Education* 62 (1) (1991).

[34] L. Horn and C. Maw, *Undergraduates Who Work While Enrolled in Postsecondary Education: 1989-90*. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, September 1994.

Many of the young adults in the eighth-grade cohort of 1988 also combined work with postsecondary education. About one-half (49 percent) of the young adults who completed high school with a regular diploma reported some employment in 1993 (table 23). Two-fifths of these young workers combined work with postsecondary education, and three-fifths reported work only.

Table 23—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by employment and education status in 1993, by high school completion status, sex, and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary education or employed	
				Un-employed	Not in labor force
Total	39.6	18.0	35.1	2.6	4.7
1994 high school completion status					
High school graduates	47.8	20.5	28.1	1.1	2.4
GED/certificate	7.7	12.6	60.5	8.1	11.2
Enrolled	2.4	4.3	66.7	11.9	14.6
Dropouts	0.7	4.0	70.0	7.5	17.9
Sex					
Male	36.1	18.9	39.9	2.2	2.8
Female	43.2	17.1	30.3	2.9	6.6
Socioeconomic status					
Low SES	16.8	14.1	55.3	4.2	9.6
Middle SES	36.3	20.9	36.9	2.0	3.9
High SES	68.4	16.2	12.5	1.7	1.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Relatively more GED recipients and dropouts worked in 1993 than did high school graduates, but fewer of them combined work with postsecondary education. Nearly three-quarters of the GED recipients and dropouts worked in 1993, but only one in six of the GED recipients who worked combined work with postsecondary education and only one in twenty dropouts who worked attended a postsecondary program.

Although large percentages of the continuing high school students and dropouts reported employment in 1993, they were more likely than regular high school graduates to be either unemployed or out of the labor force.[35] In 1993, only 4 percent of the regular diploma graduates neither attended a postsecondary program nor worked, compared to 25 and 27 percent of the dropouts and continuing high school students.

The data in Table 24 show that while Asian high school graduates were less likely than other students to work in 1993, the aggregate pattern, with about 50 percent of the high school diploma recipients working, holds for black, white, and Hispanic young adults.

[35]GED recipients also appear to be more likely than graduates to either be unemployed or not in the labor force. However, due to relatively small sample sizes these differences are not statistically significant.

Table 24—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by employment and education status by high school completion status, by race-ethnicity, fall 1994

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary educaton or employed		
				Un-employed	Not in labor force	Total
Total	39.6	18.0	35.1	2.6	4.7	7.3
High school graduates	47.8	20.5	28.1	1.1	2.4	3.6
Other	3.5	6.9	65.9	9.0	14.7	23.7
Race						
Asian/Pacific Islander						
Total	59.2	17.6	19.1	1.4	2.7	4.1
High school graduates	64.3	17.9	15.4	1.0	1.4	2.4
Other	3.3	15.4	59.4	5.4	16.6	22.0
Hispanic						
Total	26.3	19.6	42.3	3.0	8.8	11.8
High school graduates	35.6	25.4	34.0	1.0	4.0	5.0
Other	1.6	4.1	64.2	8.4	21.7	30.1
Black, non-Hispanic						
Total	31.0	17.1	35.4	8.2	8.4	16.6
High school graduates	40.8	20.9	30.2	3.6	4.5	8.1
Other	5.7	7.3	48.6	20.1	18.3	38.4
White, non-Hispanic						
Total	42.8	18.1	34.5	1.2	3.4	4.6
High school graduates	50.0	20.1	27.5	0.6	1.9	2.5
Other	3.4	7.4	72.8	4.6	11.8	16.5
Native American						
Total	13.6	10.9	50.8	16.6	8.2	24.7
High school graduates	19.4	15.9	45.4	13.6	5.8	19.4
Other	4.3	2.9	59.5	21.2	12.0	33.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Employment data for GED recipients, continuing high school students, and dropouts show that about 70 percent of the young adults in each of these groups are employed.[36] Despite these relatively high levels of employment, black young adults are more likely to be unemployed than their white contemporaries. In fact, the percent of black young adults without a regular high school diploma who are unemployed or out of the labor force is twice as high as the comparable percentages for white and half again as high for Asian young adults (38 percent for blacks versus 17 percent for whites).

This race–ethnicity difference among young adults without regular high school diplomas is only apparent in the unemployment/out of the labor force patterns of young adults who are from families at the lowest socioeconomic level (table 25). About 41 percent of the black young adults and 33 percent of the Hispanic young adults in the lowest socioeconomic group are not in a postsecondary program or working, compared to approximately 17 percent for their white contemporaries. This difference diminishes within the middle socioeconomic group.[37]

[36]Due to these similarities in employment status and sample size considerations, young adults in these three groups are combined in the following analyses.

[37]There are not enough cases for Asian young adults without regular high school diplomas to yield stable estimates for socioeconomic group comparisons. Nor are there enough cases for high socioeconomic status youth without regular high school diplomas to yield stable estimates for race-ethnicity group comparisons.

Table 25—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders without a regular high school diploma by socioeconomic status, by race–ethnicity, fall 1994

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary education and unemployed/ not in labor force
Overall				
Total	3.5	6.9	65.9	23.7
Low SES	1.5	3.9	67.8	26.8
Middle SES	4.2	9.2	68.3	18.4
High SES	10.1	12.6	51.0	26.4
Race				
Asian Pacific Islander				
Total	3.3	15.4	59.4	22.0
Low SES	—	—	—	—
Middle SES	—	—	—	—
High SES	—	—	—	—
Hispanic				
Total	1.6	4.1	64.2	30.1
Low SES	1.2	4.0	61.5	33.3
Middle SES	2.2	3.9	75.6	18.3
High SES	—	—	—	—
Black, non-Hispanic				
Total	5.7	7.3	48.6	38.4
Low SES	2.3	4.3	52.7	40.8
Middle SES	7.9	14.2	49.0	28.8
High SES	—	—	—	—
White, non-Hispanic				
Total	3.4	7.4	72.8	16.5
Low SES	1.3	3.7	78.0	17.0
Middle SES	3.7	8.7	71.6	15.9
High SES	9.3	16.8	59.3	14.5
Native American				
Total	4.3	2.9	59.5	33.3
Low SES	0.0	0.7	50.9	48.4
Middle SES	—	—	—	—
High SES	—	—	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

For both sexes, the percent who are unemployed or not in the labor force is substantially higher among the young adults who did not have regular high school diplomas (14 percent versus 3 percent for males and 34 percent versus 4 percent for females) (table 26). However, among those without regular high school diplomas, males are more likely to work or combine postsecondary education and work (83 percent for males versus 61 percent for females); while females are more likely to be out of the labor force (24 percent for females versus 7 percent for males).

Table 26—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by employment and education status, by high school completion status, by sex and socioeconomic status

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary education or employed		
				Un-employed	Not in labor force	Total
Sex						
Male						
Total	36.1	18.9	39.9	2.2	2.8	5.1
High school graduates	44.3	21.2	31.8	1.0	1.8	2.8
Other	2.7	9.6	73.3	7.4	7.0	14.4
Female						
Total	43.2	17.1	30.3	2.9	6.6	9.5
High school graduates	51.3	19.9	24.5	1.3	3.0	4.3
Other	4.5	3.8	57.4	10.8	23.5	34.3
Socioeconomic status						
Low SES						
Total	16.8	14.1	55.3	4.2	9.6	13.8
High school graduates	24.9	19.5	48.6	2.2	4.8	7.0
Other	1.5	3.9	67.8	7.9	18.8	26.8
Middle SES						
Total	36.3	20.9	36.9	2.0	3.9	5.9
High school graduates	42.5	23.2	30.8	1.2	2.3	3.5
Other	4.2	9.2	68.3	6.1	12.2	18.4
High SES						
Total	68.4	16.2	12.5	1.7	1.3	3.0
High school graduates	72.3	16.4	9.8	0.3	1.2	1.4
Other	10.1	12.6	51.0	22.7	3.7	26.4

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Employment and Earnings

Different paths through high school may also have consequences for those not pursuing further education. For example, most studies show that both those with alternative credentials and dropouts have earnings substantially below those of regular high school graduates. Furthermore, most researchers have found few differences in employment or earnings between holders of alternative certificates and other high school dropouts.[38]

These findings are seen in the 1993 earnings of the eighth-grade cohort of 1988. Overall, among those not enrolled in some educational program, those with a high school diploma made substantially more than did those with either a high school equivalency certificate or no high school credential at all. Graduates earned on average $5,899 (median earnings), while alternative completers earned $2,203 and dropouts earned $2,324 (figure 5). However, this may be a function of the greater tendency of non-graduates to be unemployed or not in the labor force (see previous section). Indeed, when the sample is restricted to those who reported some income in 1993, the differences between the graduates and alternative completers is no longer statistically significant. However, while the relative difference appears to be less between high school graduates and dropouts this difference is still significant. High school completers reporting income for 1993 made about $8,900 on average, compared with only $6,800 for dropouts.

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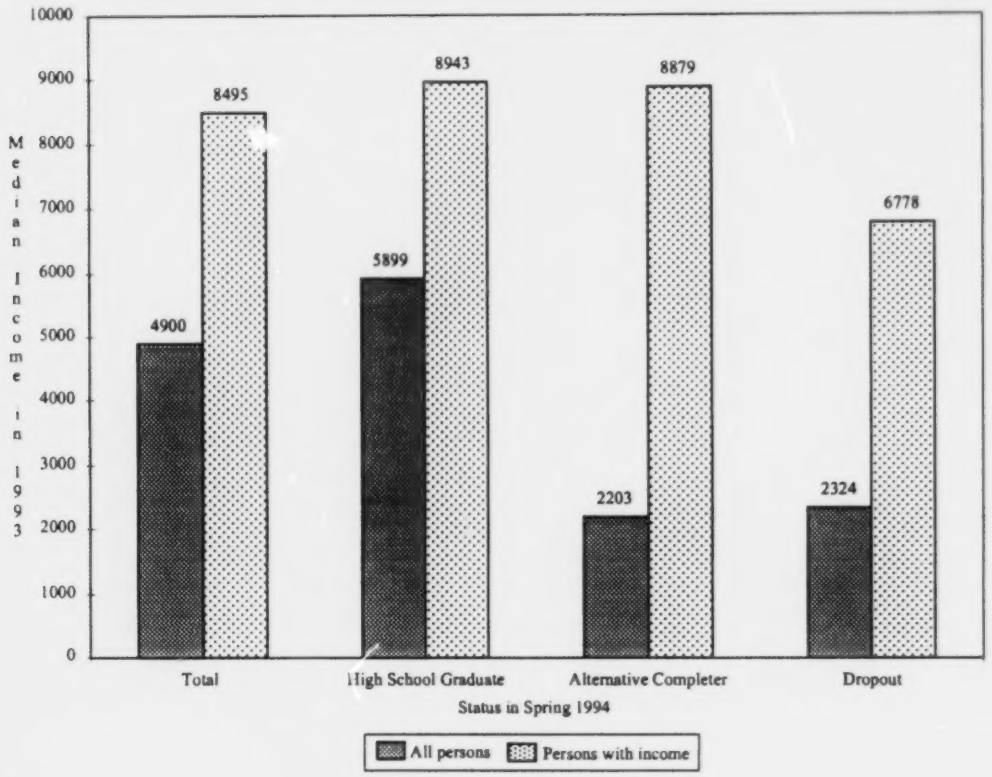
[38] For a comprehensive review of this literature see T. Smith, *Who Values the GED?: Economic and Sociological Perspectives on Why Dropouts Get the GED and Why the State Supports It*. Working series paper, National Center for Education Statistics (1995).

Figure 5—Median income for 1988 eighth graders not enrolled in educational programs and reporting income, by high school completion status: 1994



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

While overall there were differences in the reported income for high school completers and dropouts, these differences were not apparent when looking at completion status within sex or racial–ethnic or socioeconomic groups (tables 27 and 28). With the possible exception of the differences in income among blacks (differences which are not statistically significant), high school dropouts within each racial–ethnic group earned on average no more or less than those who had completed high school. Youth from low socioeconomic backgrounds who were working and not enrolled in any educational programs made less than students from middle class backgrounds, but within these social classes, dropouts earned as much as did completers.

Without considering educational attainment, income data for Hispanic, black, and white young adults show that black members of this cohort earned less than did whites. Black median income (for those reporting income) was about $6,000, while white median income was about $9,000. In fact, black graduates on average earned less than white dropouts—black high school graduates earned $5,847 while white dropouts earned $8,828.

Table 27—Median income for 1988 eighth graders not enrolled in educational programs and reporting income, by high school completion status, by socioeconomic status and race–ethnicity: 1994

	Total	Socioeconomic Status*	
		Low	Middle
Total	$8,495	$7,977	$8,981
High school graduate	8,943	7,979	8,990
Alternative completer	8,879	7,549	8,804
Dropout	6,778	7,876	8,843
Race			
Asian/Pacific Islander	7,868	8,364	10,823
High school graduate	7,907	—	7,755
Alternative completer	—	—	—
Dropout	—	—	—
Hispanic	7,904	6,995	8,939
High school graduate	7,922	6,845	8,976
Alternative completer	7,766	7,521	7,757
Dropout	7,920	7,568	7,958
Black, non-Hispanic	5,846	5,341	4,988
High school graduate	5,847	5,926	4,969
Alternative completer	3,157	3,000	—
Dropout	4,666	4,739	5,061
White, non-Hispanic	8,992	8,160	9,486
High school graduate	8,999	8,331	9,883
Alternative completer	8,893	7,991	8,975
Dropout	8,828	8,094	8,965
Native American	7,393	7,926	7,683
High school graduate	8,626	8,843	8,205
Alternative completer	—	—	—
Dropout	—	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.
*Based on the students' family socioeconomic status as of 1992. The number of high socioeconomic status students who were not in school and working are too few to provide reliable estimates of their median income.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

In 1993 there were also substantial differences in the earnings between males and females in the eighth-grade class of 1988 (at least those not enrolled in some kind of educational program). Male members of the eighth-grade class of 1988 reported earnings averaging about two-thirds higher than did females (table 28). While there were no reliable differences between the earnings of male alternative completers and dropouts, female alternative completers (those not in school) did not report earnings substantially less than female graduates.[39]

Table 28—Median income for 1988 eighth graders not enrolled in educational programs and reporting income, by high school completion status, by sex and socioeconomic status: 1994

		Socioeconomic Status*	
	Total	Low	Middle
Total	$8,495	$7,977	$8,981
High school graduate	8,943	7,979	8,990
Alternative completer	8,879	7,549	8,804
Dropout	6,778	7,876	8,843
Male	9,987	9,713	9,994
High school graduate	9,988	8,990	9,996
Alternative completer	9,709	9,208	10,808
Dropout	9,739	9,779	9,003
Female	5,988	5,909	6,490
High school graduate	5,995	5,933	6,077
Alternative completer	4,757	3,153	6,026
Dropout	5,941	5,841	7,607

*Based on the students' family socioeconomic status as of 1992. The number of high socioeconomic status students who were not in school and working are too few to provide reliable estimates of their median income.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

[39] These relationships between student characteristics, earnings, and completion status are quite complex and should be interpreted with caution—especially since the view is only of former students not currently enrolled in school.

Family Formation

While research has shown the importance of the sequencing of transitional events to later adult success, the timing of these events is also important. In particular, early entry into adult roles such as spouse or parent may restrict later choices.[40] For example, for young women, those who marry early are more likely to terminate their schooling and are more likely to have more children.[41] After high school, those who are enrolled continuously in school are more likely to delay marriage and parenthood. As might be expected, the students who dropped out of high school or who were GED graduates were more likely to start families than students who graduated from high school. By the spring of 1994, more than one-half of the high school dropouts had at least one child compared with only 9 percent of high school graduates (table 29). Furthermore, 43 percent of the high school dropouts reported ever having been married or lived in a marriage-like arrangement compared with 13 percent of high school graduates (table 30).

Table 29—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by number of children born, by high school completion status: 1994

	None	One	Two or More
Total	84.1	11.9	4.0
1994 high school completion status			
High school graduates	90.8	8.0	1.2
GED/certificate	61.9	23.1	15.0
Enrolled	57.7	30.4	11.9
Dropouts	46.9	33.3	19.8

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

[40] A. Pallas, *The Determinants of High School Dropout*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University (1986); D. Hogan, *Transitions and Social Change: The Early Lives of American Men*. New York: Academic (1981).

[41] M. M. Marin, W. Chan, and J. Raymond, "Consequences of the Process of Transition to Adulthood for Adult Economic Well Being." In R.G. Corwin ed. *Research in the Sociology of Education and Socialization*, Greenwich CT: JAI, 1987.

Table 30—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by marital/living arrangements, by high school completion status: 1994

	Ever married*	Never married
Total	17.4	82.6
1994 high school completion status		
High school graduates	12.8	87.2
GED/certificate	35.4	64.6
Enrolled	18.2	81.8
Dropouts	42.9	57.1

*Includes ever living in marriage-like relationship.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Not only were dropouts more likely to have children, they were more likely to have children early; more than 60 percent of the 1992 births occurred prior to the dropouts' on-time high school completion date (August 1992) (table 31). Conversely, the students who received a regular high school diploma were less likely to have children early; only 9 percent had children by the spring of 1994 (table 29), and only about one-third of the children were born prior to an on-time high school completion (table 31).

Table 31—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with children, by time of birth of first child, by high school completion status: 1994

	Prior to August 1992*	After August 1992
Total	49.0	51.0
1994 high school completion status		
High school graduates	35.2	64.9
GED/certificate	65.9	34.1
Enrolled	54.9	45.1
Dropouts	61.9	38.1

*Includes August 1992 births.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Taken as a group, nearly half of the GED recipients, continuing high school students, and dropouts had a child during or just after their high school years and generally this percent did

not vary significantly across race–ethnicity groups (table 32). In contrast, although the percent of regular high school graduates with a child was 21 percent or less in each race–ethnicity group, black and Hispanic high school graduates were two or three times as likely to have a child as their white and Asian peers.

Table 32—Percentage of NELS:88 eighth graders with at least one child, by race-ethnicity, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: Spring 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Overall						
Total	15.9	7.4	26.4	29.2	11.8	33.9
High school graduates	9.2	4.5	16.2	21.0	6.5	20.3
Other	45.1	37.3	53.8	50.0	40.6	55.2
Low socioeconomic status						
Total	29.3	11.2	31.5	37.4	25.3	39.5
High school graduates	18.3	7.2	18.6	27.4	14.4	29.3
Other	49.8	—	57.9	56.2	44.1	51.9
Middle socioeconomic status						
Total	14.8	8.6	20.8	25.9	12.3	32.2
High school graduates	9.4	5.6	15.7	20.4	7.1	16.2
Other	43.0	—	40.0	45.5	42.4	—
High socioeconomic status						
Total	4.2	0.9	9.1	15.2	3.2	—
High school graduates	2.8	0.5	8.0	6.6	2.5	—
Other	23.5	—	—	—	16.7	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Not surprisingly, eighth graders with low socioeconomic backgrounds were more likely to have children than were their more affluent peers; 29 percent in the lowest socioeconomic group had children compared to 15 percent in the middle group and to 4 percent in the highest group (table 32). As table 32 indicates, this overall pattern is shared by white, Hispanic, and Asian young adults, with the percentages in the lowest socioeconomic group exceeding the percentages in the highest socioeconomic group in each case. The percentage for black young adults follow the same pattern; the decrease in percentages as socioeconomic status levels rise is less pronounced but still significant.

The data in table 32 also indicate that among both the high school graduates and nongraduates the percentage of young adults with children decreases as socioeconomic level increases. The pattern of a lower percent of high school graduates with children (shown in table 29) than the percent for those without a high school diploma is repeated within each socioeconomic group. And in the case of both the regular high school graduates and others, the percentage of young adults with children decreases as the socioeconomic level increases.

Females were more likely than males to report having a child by 1994 (22 versus 10 percent), and for both sexes those without high school diplomas were more likely than high school graduates to have children (table 33). Both male and female diploma recipients were less likely to have children as socioeconomic levels increased. This pattern is repeated among males without diplomas, but females without diplomas generally were more likely than males to have children.

Table 33—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with at least one child, by sex, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Overall			
Total	15.9	9.9	21.9
High school graduates	9.2	5.2	13.1
Other	45.1	29.2	63.0
Low socioeconomic status			
Total	29.3	20.4	37.5
High school graduates	18.3	10.8	24.5
Other	49.8	35.8	65.4
Middle socioeconomic status			
Total	14.8	9.3	20.5
High school graduates	9.4	5.4	13.3
Other	43.0	27.6	60.6
High socioeconomic status			
Total	4.2	1.6	7.1
High school graduates	2.8	1.3	4.6
Other	23.5	5.3	52.1

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

At each socioeconomic level, one-half to two-thirds percent of women who did not graduate from high school have children (table 33); overall, 70 percent of these women had their first child prior to their on-time high school completion date (table 34). In contrast, about 39 percent of the rest of the women with children and 36 percent of all men with children had their first child before August of 1992.

Table 34—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with children born prior to scheduled graduation (8/92), by sex, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Overall			
Total	49.0	36.1	54.8
High school graduates	35.2	25.2	38.8
Other	61.1	43.7	70.2
Low socioeconomic status			
Total	49.6	34.4	57.0
High school graduates	34.0	17.4	40.0
Other	60.1	42.7	70.6
Middle socioeconomic status			
Total	48.4	40.1	52.1
High school graduates	36.4	32.5	37.8
Other	61.6	46.6	69.5
High socioeconomic status			
Total	48.6	—	53.6
High school graduates	36.1	—	39.7
Other	70.2	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

There are clear differences across socioeconomic levels and race–ethnicity groups in the likelihood of having children either during or immediately after high school. But among the young adults who have children, whether the first child was born before or after the on-time high school completion date does not vary substantially across socioeconomic levels or race–ethnicity groups (table 35).

Table 35—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with at least one child, by race–ethnicity, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Overall						
Total	15.9	42.1	48.5	55.8	45.5	63.7
High school graduates	9.2	33.5	31.6	42.2	32.0	—
Other	45.1	—	62.0	69.8	57.1	69.0
Low socioeconomic status						
Total	29.3	—	45.8	54.5	46.8	74.2
High school graduates	18.3	—	27.3	37.5	32.0	—
Other	49.8	—	57.5	70.5	55.0	—
Middle socioeconomic status						
Total	14.8	—	50.0	54.4	45.8	—
High school graduates	9.4	—	42.4	46.6	30.6	—
Other	43.0	—	60.9	65.7	60.6	—
High socioeconomic status						
Total	4.2	—	—	—	40.8	—
High school graduates	2.8	—	—	—	38.5	—
Other	23.5	—	—	—	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Thirteen percent of the high school graduates and 38 percent of those who did not graduate reported either being married or living in a marriage-like arrangement by 1994 (tables 30 and 36). Non-graduates among Hispanic and white young adults were more likely than black young adults to have been married or lived with a partner (48 percent for Hispanic, 44 percent for white, and 15 percent for black young adults) (table 36).

Table 36—Percentage of 1988 eighth graders ever married or in a marriage-like arrangement, by race–ethnicity, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Overall						
Total	17.4	9.3	25.2	10.7	17.6	30.1
High school graduates	12.8	7.4	16.9	8.9	12.9	35.0
Other	37.5	29.7	47.7	14.5	43.6	22.2
Low socioeconomic status						
Total	27.5	9.1	28.5	12.7	34.0	32.1
High school graduates	22.0	8.7	19.3	12.1	27.2	48.1
Other	37.7	—	47.2	13.7	45.7	12.5
Middle socioeconomic status						
Total	17.4	12.2	21.3	9.1	18.5	25.8
High school graduates	13.4	8.3	16.0	8.0	14.1	20.7
Other	38.1	—	41.0	11.6	44.4	—
High socioeconomic status						
Total	7.5	4.8	13.4	11.3	6.9	—
High school graduates	5.9	4.5	11.5	4.4	5.7	—
Other	29.6	—	—	—	29.8	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

The likelihood of marriage or living with a partner soon after high school decreases as socioeconomic level increases, but the difference between high school graduates and those without a high school diploma persists at each socioeconomic level, as do the differences between Hispanic and white young adults versus black young adults in the low and middle socioeconomic levels. There are not enough cases for stable race–ethnicity estimates by high school completion status and socioeconomic status.

Young women were more likely than young men to report being ever married or living with a partner (table 37). Although young men and women who did not graduate from high school were more likely than those who graduated to report marriage or living with a partner, the sex difference occurs in both groups. The decreases noted across socioeconomic levels occur for men and women who graduated. At both the low and middle socioeconomic levels, close to one half of the young women who did not graduate from high school reported being married or living with a partner.

Table 37—Percentage of NELS:88 eighth graders ever married or in a marriage-like arrangement, by sex, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Overall			
Total	17.4	12.4	22.5
High school graduates	12.8	8.5	17.1
Other	37.5	28.4	47.8
Low socioeconomic status			
Total	27.5	21.0	33.5
High school graduates	22.0	14.7	28.0
Other	37.7	31.0	45.2
Middle socioeconomic status			
Total	17.4	11.9	23.0
High school graduates	13.4	8.8	17.9
Other	38.1	27.0	50.9
High socioeconomic status			
Total	7.5	5.7	9.5
High school graduates	5.9	4.3	7.7
Other	29.6	22.3	41.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Summary

During the years 1992 to 1994, students from the eighth-grade class of 1988 took several passages toward adulthood. Some enrolled in college, some entered the work force, some started families, and some did a combination of all three. The first critical step for these young people was graduation from high school—and the data seem to indicate that many grasped the importance of this step. By August of 1994, 81 percent had graduated with a diploma and another 6 percent had received some sort of alternative credential—87 percent thus had completed high school in some fashion. Of those remaining, almost 21 percent (or 5 percent of the total cohort)

were actively working towards high school completion. Only 7 percent of the total cohort had dropped out of school and were not working towards completing high school.

Those who had failed to make this critical transition to the status of high school completers had clear impediments to their successful development to other stages of adulthood. Of those eighth graders who were still dropouts in 1994, only 7 percent were enrolled in postsecondary education and slightly more than one-quarter were either unemployed or not in the labor force.

Non-completers were also those most likely to make early transitions into adult roles for which they may not have been fully prepared. Over half of the dropouts not pursuing any further education in 1994 had at least one child (as either a cause or consequence of their dropping out of school), 41 percent of those dropouts re-enrolled in a high school program had children, and most of both groups of dropouts had children before the summer of their senior year in high school. In contrast, only about 9 percent of those who had graduated from high school had children—and those who did have children tended to have them after scheduled graduation from high school.

These results seem to confirm what many people have argued for some time—those who do not complete high school face difficulties in making successful steps in other transitions to adult life.[42] While the economy may have changed dramatically in the last ten years since the last high school cohort was examined (the High School and Beyond study of the sophomore class of 1982), any such changes have *not* eliminated the necessity of making this critical passage to adult life.

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[42] R.R. Rindfuss, C.G. Swicegood, and R.A. Rosenfeld, "Disorder in the Life Course: How Common and Does it Matter?" *American Sociological Review* 94 (1987).

APPENDIX A

Standard Error and Time Series Tables

Table A1—Standard errors and population sizes for Table 1: Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, and region: October 1994

Characteristics	Event dropout and retention rate		Percent of all dropouts	
	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)
Total	0.37	9,374	—	497
Sex				
Male	0.51	4,762	3.57	249
Female	0.53	4,611	3.57	248
Race–ethnicity[1]				
White, non-Hispanic	0.40	6,499	3.55	274
Black, non-Hispanic	1.22	1,435	3.26	95
Hispanic	2.19	1,088	4.46	109
Family income[2]				
Low income level	1.55	1,187	3.31	155
Middle income level	0.48	5,526	3.52	288
High income level	0.44	2,661	2.22	54
Region				
Northeast	0.55	1,876	1.83	59
Midwest	0.71	2,296	2.74	113
South	0.72	3,170	3.48	214
West	0.82	2,033	2.48	110

—Not applicable.
[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Family income in current residence. Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1993; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A2—Standard errors for Table 2: Event dropout and retention rates and number and distribution of dropouts from grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1994

Age	Event dropout and retention rate		Percent of all dropouts	
	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)
Total	0.37	9,374	—	497
Age*				
15–16	0.50	2,624	2.48	70
17	0.48	3,264	2.87	101
18	0.80	2,547	3.42	177
19	2.08	633	2.61	79
20–24	3.83	306	2.50	71

—Not applicable.
*Age when a person dropped out may be one year younger, because the dropout event could occur at any time over a 12-month period.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A3—Standard errors for Table 3: Membership, dropout count and rate for grades 9-12, 1993–94

Data for table 3 represents a universe collection and, as such, do not have an associated standard errors. This sheet is intended as a placeholder to keep numbering consistent with the report.

Table A4—Standard errors for Table 4: Rate and number of status dropouts, ages 16–24: October 1990 through October 1994

	October				
	1990	1991	1992[1]	1993[1]	1994[1,2]
Status dropout rate (percent)	0.29	0.30	0.28	0.28	0.28
Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	92	93	88	87	91

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[2]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A5—Standard errors for Table 5: Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by sex, race–ethnicity, income, and region: October 1994

Characteristics	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.28	91	—	—
Sex				
Male	0.41	67	1.77	0.62
Female	0.38	63	1.91	0.62
Race–ethnicity[1]				
White, non-Hispanic	0.29	63	1.92	0.50
Black, non-Hispanic	0.89	43	2.77	0.95
Hispanic	1.66	73	3.16	1.24
Family income[2]				
Low income level	0.85	50	2.13	0.80
Middle income level	0.36	70	1.69	0.57
High income level	0.38	29	2.49	0.77
Region				
Northeast	0.49	30	2.08	0.68
Midwest	0.47	37	2.37	0.76
South	0.52	60	2.03	0.72
West	0.69	49	2.28	0.80

—Not applicable.
[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1994; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A6—Standard errors for Table 6: Percentage distribution of status dropouts, ages 16–24, by level of schooling attained and race–ethnicity: October 1994

Level of schooling attained	Total	Race–ethnicity*		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	—	—	—	—
Level of schooling attained				
Less than 1st grade	0.32	0.49	0.86	0.77
1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th grade	0.47	0.25	1.63	1.66
5th or 6th grade	0.72	0.38	1.00	2.70
7th or 8th grade	0.81	1.18	1.80	2.25
Less than 9th grade	1.11	1.31	2.62	3.27
9th grade	0.96	1.44	1.99	2.58
Less than 10th grade	1.28	1.77	3.10	3.21
10th grade	1.05	1.69	3.20	2.06
11th grade	1.18	1.82	3.66	2.55
12th grade, without diploma	0.80	1.15	2.73	1.90

—Not applicable.
*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A7—Standard errors for Table 7: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by income and race–ethnicity: October 1994

Family income	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	0.28	0.29	0.89	1.66
Family income[2]				
Low income level	0.85	1.00	2.13	3.49
Middle income level	0.36	0.38	1.05	2.04
High income level	0.38	0.37	1.36	4.26

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Low income is defined as the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes for 1994; middle income is between 20 and 80 percent of all family incomes; and high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A8—Standard errors for Table 8: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region and race–ethnicity: October 1994

Region	Total	Race–ethnicity*		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	0.28	0.29	0.89	1.66
Region				
Northeast	0.49	0.49	1.87	3.74
Midwest	0.47	0.47	2.05	5.06
South	0.52	0.60	1.22	2.78
West	0.69	0.66	2.83	2.60

*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A9—Standard errors for Table 9: Population distribution, ages 16–24, by region and race–ethnicity: October 1994

Region	Total	Race–ethnicity*		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
Total	—	—	—	—
Region				
Northeast	0.79	0.95	2.44	3.36
Midwest	0.77	0.90	2.42	3.48
South	0.71	0.88	1.74	2.94
West	0.78	0.97	2.56	2.68

—Not applicable.
*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A10—Standard errors for Table 10:NELS:88 8th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1992

Characteristics	Cohort dropout rate			
	Spring 1988–90	Spring 1990–92[1]	Spring 1988–92	August 1992
Total	0.35	0.38	0.47	0.38
Sex				
Male	0.55	0.47	0.56	0.50
Female	0.51	0.53	0.66	0.56
Race–ethnicity[2]				
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.02	1.47	1.47	1.46
Hispanic	0.84	1.20	1.31	1.22
Black, non-Hispanic	1.51	1.07	1.39	1.22
White, non-Hispanic	0.44	0.40	0.49	0.41
Native American	2.32	6.22	7.13	4.60

[1]The denominator for this rate includes the members of the 1988 8th-grade cohort who were still enrolled in school in the spring of 1990; excluded are students who dropped out between 1988 and 1990 and students who migrated out of the country or died.
[2]Not shown separately are 434 persons (approximately 2 percent of the unweighted sample) whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: This table is based on the fully expanded cohort of eighth graders. This sample includes students excluded in the base year sample, whose sex, race, and dropout status were determined through the Followback Study of Excluded Students.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Base-Year, First, and Second Followup Survey and 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994, unpublished data.

Table A11—Standard errors for Table 11: NELS:88 eighth grade cohort dropout rates and completion status, by sex and race–ethnicity: August 1992[1]

	Status August 1992			
	Graduated	GED	Enrolled[2]	Dropout
Total	0.53	0.26	0.34	0.38
Sex				
Male	0.76	0.39	0.55	0.50
Female	0.71	0.34	0.39	0.56
Race–ethnicity[3]				
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.53	—	0.54	1.44
Hispanic	1.31	0.32	0.66	1.28
Black, non-Hispanic	1.92	1.08	1.54	1.23
White, non-Hispanic	0.58	0.30	0.36	0.42
Native American	5.33	—	1.60	4.61

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.
[1]Table does not include individuals who received a certificate of attendance (Less than one-tenth of one percent of students).
[2]Includes those enrolled in regular high school and in alternative programs.
[3]Not shown separately are 434 persons (approximately 2 percent of the unweighted sample) whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: This table is based on the fully expanded cohort of eighth graders. This sample included students excluded in the base year sample, whose sex, race, and dropout status were determined through the Followback Study of Excluded Students.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 Base-Year, First, and Second Followup Survey and 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994, unpublished data.

Table A12—Standard errors for Table 12: HS&B and NELS:88 10th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates, by demographic characteristics: August 1982 and 1992

Status in 10th grade	Cohort dropout rate HS&B[1] 1980–82	Cohort dropout rate NELS:88 1990-92
Total	0.42	0.36
Sex		
Male	0.64	0.45
Female	0.54	0.56
Race-ethnicity[2]		
Asian, Pacific Islander	0.73	2.14
Hispanic	1.65	1.44
Black, non-Hispanic	1.15	1.22
White, non-Hispanic	0.46	0.33
Native American	5.33	8.09
Family below poverty level		
Yes	0.86	1.16
[illegible]	0.28	0.35
Family composition		
Intact family	0.24	0.42
Two adults/step-parents	1.25	1.06
Single parent	0.78	0.96
Other	1.86	2.22
Own child in home		
Yes		
Male	6.50	2.35
Female	7.42	3.91
No		
Male	0.38	0.46
Female	0.36	0.56

[1] Rates for HS&B are revised from previously published data.
[2] Not shown separately are those included in the total whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: See the technical appendix for the definitions of poverty and family composition used in these tables.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Study, Sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

Table A13—Standard errors for Table 13: Percentage of HS&B 1980 and NELS:88 sophomore cohort dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them, by sex and race–ethnicity: 1982 and 1992

Reasons for dropping out	HS&B 1982			NELS:88 1992		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
School-related:						
Did not like school	1.37	1.91	1.99	2.76	2.92	4.49
Could not get along with teachers	1.01	1.46	1.29	2.33	2.48	3.84
Could not get along with students	0.70	1.01	1.01	1.84	3.07	1.98
Was suspended/expelled from school	0.93	1.49	0.82	1.96	2.24	1.80
Had poor grades/was failing school[1]	1.40	1.96	1.90	2.49	2.91	3.94
Family-related:						
Was pregnant[2]	1.73	—	1.73	3.20	—	3.20
Got married	1.25	1.02	2.20	1.54	0.81	2.90

—Not applicable.
[1]In the NELS:88 survey the wording of this item was changed to "was failing in school."
[2]Females only.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond study, sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

Table A14—Standard errors for Table 14: High school completion rates and method of completion of 18- through 24-year-olds not currently enrolled in high school or below, by race–ethnicity[1]: October 1990 through October 1994

Completion method	Year				
	1990	1991	1992[2]	1993[2]	1994[2,3]
	(percent)				
Total					
Completed	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.36
Diploma	0.82	0.82	0.81	0.81	0.84
Alternative	0.44	0.41	0.45	0.45	0.51
White, non-Hispanic					
Completed	0.37	0.38	0.36	0.37	0.36
Diploma	0.88	0.88	0.86	0.87	0.89
Alternative	0.52	0.50	0.54	0.52	0.59
Black, non-Hispanic					
Completed	1.22	1.26	1.27	1.27	1.19
Diploma	2.78	2.81	2.83	2.87	2.88
Alternative	1.48	1.48	1.49	1.59	1.78
Hispanic					
Completed	2.35	2.32	2.32	2.26	2.06
Diploma	4.50	4.53	4.48	4.48	4.50
Alternative	1.44	1.30	1.80	2.13	2.03

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A15—Standard errors for Table 15: Completion rates and number and distribution of completers, ages 18 through 24 years old, by sex, race–ethnicity, and region: October 1994

Characteristics	Completion rate		Percent of all completers
	Standard error	Population (in thousands)	Standard error
Total	0.39	86	—
Sex			
Male	0.58	62	0.73
Female	0.52	59	0.72
Race–ethnicity*			
White, non-Hispanic	0.38	59	0.58
Black, non-Hispanic	1.31	40	1.11
Hispanic	2.62	66	1.44
Region			
Northeast	0.66	28	0.80
Midwest	0.63	34	0.89
South	0.73	57	0.84
West	0.98	46	0.94

—Not applicable.
*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table A16—Standard errors and population sizes for Table 16: High school completion rates of 18- through 24-year-olds, by state, October 1989-91 and 1992-94

State	1989-91		1992-94	
	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)	Standard error	Population size (in thousands)
Total	0.21	71,160	0.21	69,792
Alaska	4.41	130	2.26	453
Alabama	1.75	1,206	2.00	885
Arkansas	2.11	640	2.08	641
Arizona	1.91	972	2.00	860
California	0.71	8,972	0.70	8,602
Colorado	1.74	890	1.68	973
Connecticut	1.58	940	1.46	806
Washington, D.C.	4.71	169	4.78	130
Delaware	4.09	183	2.79	193
Florida	1.02	3,419	0.97	3,737
Georgia	1.31	1,840	1.48	1,891
Hawaii	2.49	271	2.75	283
Iowa	1.28	814	1.26	881
Idaho	3.81	244	3.19	287
Illinois	0.96	3,394	0.93	3,386
Indiana	1.28	1,538	1.26	1,630
Kansas	1.55	738	1.58	728
Kentucky	1.86	1,105	1.93	948
Louisiana	1.79	1,243	1.77	1,092
Massachusetts	1.13	1,829	1.13	1,587
Maryland	1.41	1,420	1.15	1,257
Maine	2.68	302	2.05	340
Michigan	1.04	2,760	0.96	2,621
Minnesota	1.16	1,328	1.11	1,300
Missouri	1.33	1,515	1.27	1,410
Mississippi	2.09	779	1.79	782
Montana	2.92	200	3.07	207
North Carolina	1.36	1,956	1.28	1,932
North Dakota	2.38	188	2.17	178
Nebraska	2.21	434	1.49	452
New Hampshire	2.95	322	3.25	279
New Jersey	1.01	2,224	1.04	1,932
New Mexico	2.82	414	2.99	385
Nevada	3.40	315	3.23	335
New York	0.74	4,997	0.77	4,710
Ohio	0.86	3,269	0.89	2,963
Oklahoma	1.88	805	2.13	782
Oregon	1.81	743	2.15	775
Pennsylvania	0.85	3,112	0.86	3,140
Rhode Island	3.14	283	3.02	235
South Carolina	1.91	1,000	1.69	999
South Dakota	3.70	200	2.90	190
Tennessee	1.72	1,542	1.59	1,459
Texas	0.93	4,985	0.87	5,209
Utah	1.59	573	1.7	587
Virginia	1.34	1,595	1.21	1,758
Vermont	4.71	138	3.94	149
Washington	1.52	1,203	1.41	1,411
Wisconsin	1.05	1,400	1.07	1,359
West Virginia	2.67	507	2.43	531
Wyoming	4.21	112	3.85	132

[1]Numbers on this table reflect 3 year averages.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, various years, unpublished data.

Table A17—Standard errors for Table 17: Completion status of eighth grade class of 1988, August 1992 and spring 1994

	Completion status August 1992		
Completion status spring 1994	Completed	Enrolled	Dropout
Total	0.65	0.48	0.44
Received a high school diploma	0.35	2.44	2.21
Received a GED	0.35	2.80	1.11
Received a certificate of attendance	—	0.11	0.16
Currently in high school	0.03	0.82	0.42
Working towards an equivalency	—	2.20	2.54
Dropout	—	3.18	2.53

—Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A18—Standard errors for Table 18: Percentage of NELS:88 eighth graders by high school completion status, by race–ethnicity, sex, and socioeconomic status: 1994

	High school graduates	GED/ certificate	Enrolled	Dropouts
Total	0.68	0.41	0.32	0.45
Race–ethnicity				
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.83	0.61	0.52	1.76
Hispanic	1.74	0.77	1.09	1.46
Black, non-Hispanic	2.42	1.88	1.25	1.29
White, non-Hispanic	0.68	0.40	0.31	0.48
Native American	4.23	3.97	4.04	4.88
Sex				
Male	0.94	0.58	0.41	0.69
Female	0.83	0.56	0.45	0.48
Socioeconomic status				
Low SES	1.32	0.69	0.80	1.21
Middle SES	0.77	0.54	0.42	0.48
High SES	1.08	0.96	0.40	0.27

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A19—Standard errors for Table 19: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by postsecondary enrollment status, by high school completion status, spring 1994*

	No post-secondary education	Enrolled in degree program	Certified or enrolled in certificate program	Other enrollment
Total	0.77	0.77	0.36	0.31
High school completion status				
High school graduate	0.64	0.74	0.40	0.36
GED/certificate	2.91	2.36	1.74	1.23
Enrolled	1.56	0.75	1.13	0.94
Dropout	1.95	0.37	1.80	0.79

*Postsecondary enrollment includes enrollment in degree granting programs, certificate programs, and programs not leading to a certificate or degree.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A20—Standard errors for Table 20: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders never enrolled in postsecondary education by race–ethnicity, by high school completion status, spring 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Total	0.77	2.38	2.01	2.01	0.85	5.00
High school completion status						
High school graduate	0.64	1.95	2.04	1.93	0.70	6.17
GED/certificate	2.91	—	4.55	7.85	3.43	—
Enrolled	1.56	—	1.84	1.76	2.58	—
Dropout	1.95	—	0.63	9.52	1.39	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A21—Standard errors for Table 21: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders never enrolled in postsecondary education by race–ethnicity, by socioeconomic status and high school completion status, fall 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Total	0.77	2.38	2.01	2.01	0.85	5.00
High school completion status						
High school graduate	0.64	1.95	2.04	1.93	0.70	6.17
GED/certificate	2.91	—	4.55	7.85	3.43	—
Other	1.29	5.05	0.73	5.10	1.40	1.85
Low SES	1.20	4.09	2.65	2.92	1.37	2.90
High school graduates	1.51	3.73	3.38	3.38	1.77	3.86
GED/certificate	3.96	—	6.33	10.07	5.15	—
Other	0.89	—	0.96	3.04	1.05	—
Middle SES	0.89	3.86	2.97	2.81	0.97	6.68
High school graduates	0.82	2.94	2.69	2.88	0.87	6.22
GED/certificate	3.92	—	6.94	10.89	4.69	—
Other	2.83	—	1.47	11.22	2.39	—
High SES	1.13	1.63	2.25	10.00	0.81	—
High school graduates	0.62	1.65	2.09	3.25	0.67	—
GED/certificate	10.85	—	—	—	8.01	—
Other	8.08	—	—	—	9.25	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A22—Standard errors for Table 22: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders never enrolled in postsecondary education by sex, by socioeconomic status and high school completion status, fall 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Total	0.77	1.04	0.96
High school completion status			
High school graduate	0.64	0.92	0.81
GED/certificate	2.91	3.59	4.85
Other	1.29	2.31	1.19
Low SES	1.20	1.63	1.71
High school graduates	1.51	2.06	2.08
GED/certificate	3.96	4.42	6.94
Other	0.89	1.21	1.34
Middle SES	0.89	1.22	1.25
High school graduates	0.82	1.26	1.05
GED/certificate	3.92	4.98	6.28
Other	2.83	5.06	2.13
High SES	1.13	1.76	1.30
High school graduates	0.62	0.86	0.81
GED/certificate	10.85	12.22	20.29
Other	8.08	12.66	9.01

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A23—Standard errors for Table 23: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by employment and education status in 1993, by high school completion status, sex, and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary education or employed	
				Un-employed	Not in labor force
Total	0.75	0.47	0.70	0.34	0.31
1994 high school completion status					
High school graduates	0.75	0.53	0.65	0.21	0.19
GED/certificate	1.56	1.88	3.53	2.94	2.89
Enrolled	0.82	0.98	2.93	2.37	2.35
Dropouts	0.33	1.92	2.70	1.57	1.89
Sex					
Male 1.00	0.73	0.99	0.44	0.31	
Female	0.93	0.61	0.85	0.45	0.54
Socioeconomic status					
Low SES	0.90	0.81	1.39	0.77	0.74
Middle SES	0.81	0.71	0.83	0.31	0.47
High SES	1.36	0.93	0.95	0.77	0.25

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A24—Standard errors for Table 24: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by employment and education status by high school completion status, by race-ethnicity, fall 1994

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary education or employed		
				Un-employed	Not in labor force	Total
Total	0.75	0.47	0.70	0.34	0.31	0.45
High school graduates	0.75	0.53	0.65	0.21	0.19	0.28
Other	0.59	1.00	1.81	1.33	1.36	1.70
Race						
Asian/Pacific Islander						
Total	2.79	1.88	2.19	0.56	1.02	1.13
High school graduates	2.76	1.96	2.02	0.57	0.38	0.66
Other	2.21	7.02	11.53	3.06	9.88	10.15
Hispanic						
Total	1.39	1.42	1.80	0.82	0.94	1.34
High school graduates	1.71	1.75	1.98	0.23	0.86	0.89
Other	0.55	0.98	3.79	2.85	2.79	3.66
Black, non-Hispanic						
Total	1.81	1.54	2.00	1.70	1.07	1.85
High school graduates	2.03	1.68	1.79	1.24	0.76	1.40
Other	2.03	3.49	5.19	4.91	3.41	5.14
White, non-Hispanic						
Total	0.84	0.55	0.80	0.16	0.35	0.38
High school graduates	0.84	0.60	0.73	0.09	0.19	0.21
Other	0.65	1.17	2.13	0.90	1.81	1.92
Native American						
Total	3.10	2.57	8.68	10.44	2.36	9.21
High school graduates	4.25	3.49	9.04	10.01	2.14	9.04
Other	3.10	1.77	9.86	11.38	4.77	10.45

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A25—Standard errors for Table 25: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders without a regular high school diploma by socioeconomic status, by race–ethnicity, fall 1994

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary education and unemployed/ not in labor force
Overall				
Total	0.59	1.00	1.81	1.70
Low SES	0.43	0.65	2.19	2.13
Middle SES	0.96	2.05	2.74	2.46
High SES	3.28	3.62	8.27	9.43
Race				
Asian Pacific Islander	2.18	6.38	9.72	9.70
Total	—	—	—	—
Low SES	—	—	—	—
Middle SES	—	—	—	—
High SES	—	—	—	—
Hispanic				
Total	0.52	0.90	3.76	3.64
Low SES	0.52	1.27	3.71	3.70
Middle SES	1.41	1.00	5.28	4.76
High SES	—	—	—	—
Black, non-Hispanic				
Total	2.04	3.50	5.23	5.17
Low SES	0.84	1.85	5.22	5.22
Middle SES	3.44	8.51	7.37	6.16
High SES	—	—	—	—
White, non-Hispanic				
Total	0.65	1.17	2.12	1.91
Low SES	0.71	0.86	2.49	2.23
Middle SES	1.01	2.02	3.39	3.24
High SES	3.02	4.67	6.82	6.48
Native American				
Total	3.07	1.77	8.95	9.46
Low SES	0.00	0.72	9.66	9.81
Middle SES	—	—	—	—
High SES	—	—	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A26—Standard errors for Table 26: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by employment and education status, by high school completion status, by sex and socioeconomic status

	Post-secondary education only	Post-secondary education and work	Employed only	Not enrolled in postsecondary education or employed		Total
				Un-employed	Not in labor force	
Sex						
Male						
Total	1.00	0.73	0.99	0.44	0.31	0.53
High school graduates	1.06	0.81	0.92	0.27	0.22	0.35
Other	0.61	1.77	2.45	1.80	1.25	2.07
Female						
Total	0.93	0.61	0.85	0.45	0.54	0.69
High school graduates	0.94	0.70	0.82	0.29	0.31	0.41
Other	1.05	0.63	2.57	1.90	2.41	2.66
Socioeconomic status						
Low SES						
Total	0.90	0.81	1.38	0.77	0.74	1.01
High school graduates	1.24	1.17	1.56	0.64	0.58	0.84
Other	0.43	0.65	2.19	1.30	1.87	2.13
Middle SES						
Total	0.81	0.71	0.83	0.31	0.47	0.56
High school graduates	0.87	0.74	0.82	0.30	0.27	0.40
Other	0.96	2.05	2.74	1.14	2.33	2.45
High SES						
Total	1.35	0.93	0.95	0.77	0.25	0.80
High school graduates	1.16	0.96	0.70	0.09	0.24	0.25
Other	3.29	3.63	8.32	9.66	1.94	9.44

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A27—Data for Table 27: Median income for 1988 eighth graders not enrolled in educational programs and reporting income, by high school completion status, by socioeconomic status and race–ethnicity: 1994

	Total	Socioeconomic Status*	
		Low	Middle
Total	$155	$162	$199
High school graduate	113	123	281
Alternative completer	952	1,527	792
Dropout	610	846	966
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,559	2,753	1,914
High school graduate	1,782	—	2,189
Alternative completer	—	—	—
Dropout	—	—	—
Hispanic	462	675	518
High school graduate	693	892	690
Alternative completer	1,223	1,337	2,439
Dropout	731	962	488
Black, non-Hispanic	610	867	771
High school graduate	732	1,033	998
Alternative completer	1,138	603	—
Dropout	683	751	1,038
White, non-Hispanic	262	513	207
High school graduate	270	423	151
Alternative completer	679	1,587	903
Dropout	635	984	487
Native American	1953	2,132	2,646
High school graduate	1,227	2,171	1,043
Alternative completer	—	—	—
Dropout	—	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.
*Based on the students' family socioeconomic status as of 1992. The number of high socioeconomic status students who were not in school and working are too few to provide reliable estimates of their median income.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A28—Data for Table 28: Median income for 1988 eighth graders not enrolled in educational programs, by high school completion status, by sex and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Socioeconomic Status*	
		Low	Middle
Total	$155	$162	$199
High school graduate	113	123	281
Alternative completer	952	1,527	792
Dropout	610	846	966
Sex			
Male	44	279	262
High school graduate	4	476	295
Alternative completer	1,055	1,903	1,249
Dropout	418	449	796
Female	274	494	389
High school graduate	316	415	377
Alternative completer	1,139	1,648	1,329
Dropout	646	758	1,262

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.
*Based on the students' family socioeconomic status as of 1992. The number of high socioeconomic status students who were not in school and working are too few to provide reliable estimates of their median income.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A29—Standard errors for Table 29: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by number of children born, by high school completion status: 1994

	None	One	Two or More
Total	0.60	0.48	0.33
1994 high school completion status			
High school graduates	0.41	0.39	0.14
GED/certificate	3.44	2.41	3.32
Enrolled	2.86	2.71	1.61
Dropouts	2.92	2.81	1.88

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A30—Standard errors for Table 30: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders by marital/living arrangements, by high school completion status: 1994

	Ever married	Never married
Total	0.56	0.56
1994 high school completion status		
High school graduates	0.45	0.45
GED/certificate	3.19	3.19
Enrolled	6.33	6.33
Dropouts	3.00	3.00

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A31—Standard errors for Table 31: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with children, by time of birth of first child, by high school completion status: 1994

	Prior to August 1992*	After August 1992
Total	1.79	1.79
1994 high school completion status		
High school graduates	2.01	2.01
GED/certificate	4.70	4.70
Enrolled	4.44	4.44
Dropouts	4.65	4.65

*Includes August 1992 births.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A32—Standard errors for Table 32: Percentage of NELS:88 eighth graders with at least one child, by race-ethnicity, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: Spring 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native Hispanic	American
Overall						
Total	0.60	1.63	1.76	2.03	0.62	4.13
High school graduates	0.41	1.11	1.56	1.82	0.38	5.03
Other	1.93	11.32	4.00	5.66	2.44	7.45
Low socioeconomic status						
Total	1.31	2.70	2.68	2.67	1.99	5.97
High school graduates	1.12	2.60	2.44	2.84	1.35	11.04
Other	2.55	—	4.58	5.04	4.03	4.96
Middle socioeconomic status						
Total	0.74	2.94	2.57	2.74	0.78	7.28
High school graduates	0.59	1.82	2.38	2.86	0.53	5.90
Other	2.71	—	7.68	7.99	3.24	—
High socioeconomic status						
Total	0.68	0.49	4.02	6.99	0.51	—
High school graduates	0.45	0.45	4.14	2.37	0.47	—
Other	7.54	—	—	—	4.61	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A33—Standard errors for Table 33: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with at least one child, by sex, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Overall			
Total	0.60	0.69	0.85
High school graduates	0.41	0.44	0.64
Other	1.93	2.55	2.44
Low socioeconomic status			
Total	1.31	1.98	1.63
High school graduates	1.12	1.23	1.57
Other	2.55	4.03	3.18
Middle socioeconomic status			
Total	0.74	0.87	1.13
High school graduates	0.59	0.69	0.89
Other	2.71	3.43	3.79
High socioeconomic status			
Total	0.68	0.38	1.33
High school graduates	0.45	0.34	0.85
Other	7.54	2.97	12.20

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A34—Standard errors for Table 34: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with children born to scheduled graduation (8/92), by sex, by graduation status and socioeconomic status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Overall			
Total	1.79	3.13	2.11
High school graduates	2.01	3.05	2.57
Other	2.77	5.15	2.62
Low socioeconomic status			
Total	2.64	4.57	2.80
High school graduates	2.96	3.86	3.73
Other	4.00	7.28	3.41
Middle socioeconomic status			
Total	2.65	4.93	3.17
High school graduates	2.88	4.87	3.58
Other	4.16	7.98	4.30
High socioeconomic status			
Total	8.36	—	9.42
High school graduates	9.07	—	10.89
Other	12.20	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A35—Standard errors for Table 35: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders with at least one child, by race–ethnicity, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Overall						
Total	1.79	10.40	3.99	3.31	2.48	9.19
High school graduates	2.01	9.8	4.27	4.07	2.81	—
Other	2.77	—	5.33	4.65	4.11	13.89
Low socioeconomic status						
Total	2.64	—	5.03	4.12	4.15	7.11
High school graduates	2.96	—	6.04	5.12	4.39	—
Other	4.00	—	6.59	5.36	6.62	—
Middle socioeconomic status						
Total	2.65	—	7.67	5.28	3.45	—
High school graduates	2.88	—	6.72	5.94	3.48	—
Other	4.16	—	12.28	10.87	5.08	—
High socioeconomic status						
Total	8.36	—	—	—	9.03	—
High school graduates	9.07	—	—	—	10.98	—
Other	12.20	—	—	—	—	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A36—Standard errors for Table 36: Percentage of 1988 eighth graders ever married or in a marriage-like arrangement, by race-ethnicity, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	White, non-Hispanic	Native American
Overall						
Total	0.56	1.75	1.75	1.43	0.66	4.27
High school graduates	0.45	1.43	1.70	1.28	0.50	7.98
Other	1.84	10.63	3.73	3.80	2.33	6.59
Low socioeconomic status						
Total	1.30	2.61	2.39	2.03	1.98	3.54
High school graduates	1.26	2.88	2.30	2.64	1.68	9.03
Other	2.66	—	4.41	3.05	3.90	5.70
Middle socioeconomic status						
Total	0.66	2.79	2.55	1.36	0.75	5.57
High school graduates	0.59	2.13	2.76	1.48	0.65	5.02
Other	2.51	—	7.75	3.83	3.03	—
High socioeconomic status						
Total	0.84	1.93	404	7.49	0.71	—
High school graduates	0.60	1.96	4.14	1.58	0.61	—
Other	8.05	—	—	—	6.66	—

—Insufficient sample size to compute reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A37—Standard errors for Table 37: Percentage of NELS:88 eighth graders ever married or in a marriage-like arrangement, by sex, by graduation status and socioeconomic status: 1994

	Total	Male	Female
Overall			
Total	0.56	0.72	0.79
High school graduates	0.45	0.48	0.72
Other	1.84	2.61	2.59
Low socioeconomic status			
Total	1.30	2.04	1.58
High school graduates	1.26	1.52	1.82
Other	2.66	4.18	3.18
Middle socioeconomic status			
Total	0.66	0.73	1.08
High school graduates	0.59	0.60	0.99
Other	2.51	3.18	4.08
High socioeconomic status			
Total	0.84	1.24	1.05
High school graduates	0.60	0.73	0.92
Other	8.05	11.74	11.47

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Followup Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

Table A38—Data for Figure A: Proportion of 15- to 24-year-olds dropping out of grades 10 to 12, proportion of 16- to 24-year-olds who were dropouts, and proportion of 18- to 24-year-olds who completed high school: October 1972 to 1994

Year	Event rate: 15- to 24-year-olds dropouts grades 10 to 12	Status rate: 16- to 24-year-olds dropouts in age group	Completers age 18 to 24
1972	6.1	14.6	82.8
1973	6.3	14.1	83.7
1974	6.7	14.3	83.6
1975	5.8	13.9	83.8
1976	5.9	14.1	83.5
1977	6.5	14.1	83.6
1978	6.7	14.2	83.6
1979	6.7	14.6	83.1
1980	6.1	14.1	83.9
1981	5.9	13.9	83.8
1982	5.5	13.9	83.8
1983	5.2	13.7	83.9
1984	5.1	13.1	84.7
1985	5.2	12.6	85.4
1986	4.7	12.2	85.5
1987[1]	4.1	12.7	84.7
1988[1]	4.8	12.9	84.5
1989[1]	4.5	12.6	84.7
1990[1]	4.0	12.1	85.6
1991[1]	4.0	12.5	84.9
1992[1,2]	4.4	11.0	86.4
1993[1,2]	4.5	11.0	86.2
1994[1,2,3]	5.3	11.5	85.8

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (Various Years).

Table A39—Data for Figure 1: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
		(percent)		
1972	6.1	5.3	9.5	11.2
1973	6.3	5.5	9.9	10.0
1974	6.7	5.8	11.6	9.9
1975	5.8	5.0	8.7	10.9
1976	5.9	5.6	7.4	7.3
1977	6.5	6.1	8.6	7.8
1978	6.7	5.8	10.2	12.3
1979	6.7	6.0	9.9	9.8
1980	6.1	5.2	8.2	11.7
1981	5.9	4.8	9.7	10.7
1982	5.5	4.7	7.8	9.2
1983	5.2	4.4	7.0	10.1
1984	5.1	4.4	5.7	11.1
1985	5.2	4.3	7.8	9.8
1986	4.7	3.7	5.4	11.9
1987[2]	4.1	3.5	6.4	5.4
1988[2]	4.8	4.2	5.9	10.4
1989[2]	4.5	3.5	7.8	7.8
1990[2]	4.0	3.3	5.0	7.9
1991[2]	4.0	3.2	6.0	7.3
1992[2,3]	4.4	3.7	5.0	8.2
1993[2,3]	4.5	3.9	5.8	6.7
1994[2,3,4]	5.3	4.2	6.6	10.0

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[4]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A40—Standard errors for Figure 1: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
		(percent)		
1972	0.33	0.34	1.32	2.80
1973	0.33	0.35	1.35	2.65
1974	0.34	0.35	1.41	2.52
1975	0.32	0.33	1.25	2.49
1976	0.32	0.35	1.15	2.05
1977	0.34	0.37	1.20	2.13
1978	0.34	0.36	1.30	2.74
1979	0.34	0.37	1.32	2.43
1980	0.33	0.35	1.20	2.56
1981	0.33	0.34	1.29	2.28
1982	0.34	0.36	1.21	2.31
1983	0.33	0.35	1.18	2.44
1984	0.33	0.36	1.06	2.51
1985	0.34	0.37	1.26	2.55
1986	0.32	0.34	1.05	2.69
1987[2]	0.28	0.31	1.16	1.74
1988[2]	0.36	0.39	1.20	3.09
1989[2]	0.36	0.37	1.39	2.65
1990[2]	0.33	0.36	1.12	2.27
1991[2]	0.34	0.36	1.20	2.18
1992[2,3]	0.35	0.38	1.09	2.24
1993[2,3]	0.36	0.40	1.20	2.03
1994[2,3,4]	0.37	0.40	1.22	2.19

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[4]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A41—Supporting data for Figure 2: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Age				
	15–16	17	18	19	20–24
1972	4.6	5.0	5.8	13.2	28.4
1973	4.8	6.0	6.3	10.5	20.5
1974	5.4	5.6	6.3	15.7	28.3
1975	4.0	5.7	5.3	10.5	23.9
1976	4.0	4.8	7.2	9.5	23.6
1977	4.7	5.0	6.5	15.2	28.0
1978	3.8	6.0	6.1	17.1	30.7
1979	5.0	5.3	7.1	10.6	30.2
1980	3.8	5.3	5.9	12.7	27.1
1981	3.9	4.6	5.5	13.5	28.0
1982	3.2	3.7	5.9	10.6	25.7
1983	2.3	4.3	6.0	9.1	24.4
1984	2.8	3.2	5.9	11.4	21.8
1985	2.7	3.7	5.8	13.0	27.8
1986	3.0	3.3	4.6	9.1	26.8
1987[1]	1.8	3.3	5.0	6.6	22.5
1988[1]	2.1	3.9	5.9	12.2	14.9
1989[1]	2.3	3.1	4.8	9.3	21.5
1990[1]	2.4	2.8	4.5	7.9	14.0
1991[1]	2.5	3.5	4.7	5.8	10.3
1992[1,2]	2.5	3.2	4.4	8.9	23.2
1993[1,2]	2.7	3.2	5.1	8.5	23.8
1994[1,2,3]	2.7	3.1	6.9	12.4	23.1

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A42—Standard errors for Figure 2: Event dropout rates for grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by age group: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Age				
	15–16	17	18	19	20–24
1972	0.50	0.53	0.62	2.15	3.81
1973	0.51	0.57	0.64	1.90	3.67
1974	0.54	0.55	0.63	2.21	4.07
1975	0.47	0.55	0.58	1.79	3.46
1976	0.47	0.50	0.68	1.71	3.68
1977	0.51	0.52	0.63	2.12	3.58
1978	0.47	0.57	0.62	2.19	3.68
1979	0.53	0.54	0.67	1.75	3.69
1980	0.48	0.54	0.62	1.89	3.71
1981	0.49	0.52	0.59	2.02	3.52
1982	0.49	0.49	0.65	1.81	3.38
1983	0.41	0.55	0.65	1.75	3.45
1984	0.47	0.47	0.67	1.86	3.32
1985	0.45	0.52	0.68	2.05	4.22
1986	0.47	0.48	0.60	1.75	3.90
1987[1]	0.37	0.48	0.63	1.53	3.70
1988[1]	0.46	0.56	0.73	2.15	3.96
1989[1]	0.50	0.53	0.70	1.83	3.90
1990[1]	0.49	0.49	0.67	1.64	3.06
1991[1]	0.50	0.55	0.70	1.36	2.61
1992[1,2]	0.51	0.52	0.66	1.72	4.16
1993[1,2]	0.52	0.52	0.72	1.64	5.03
1994[1,2,3]	0.50	0.48	0.80	2.08	3.83

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A43—Supporting data for Figure 3: Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
			(percent)	
1972	14.6	12.3	21.3	34.3
1973	14.1	11.6	22.2	33.5
1974	14.3	11.8	21.2	33.0
1975	13.9	11.4	22.8	29.2
1976	14.1	11.9	20.5	31.4
1977	14.1	11.9	19.8	33.0
1978	14.2	11.9	20.2	33.3
1979	14.6	12.0	21.1	33.8
1980	14.1	11.3	19.2	35.2
1981	13.9	11.4	18.4	33.2
1982	13.9	11.4	18.4	31.7
1983	13.7	11.2	18.0	31.6
1984	13.1	11.0	15.5	29.8
1985	12.6	10.4	15.2	27.6
1986	12.2	9.7	14.1	30.1
1987[2]	12.7	10.4	14.2	28.6
1988[2]	12.9	9.6	14.3	35.8
1989[2]	12.6	9.4	13.9	33.0
1990[2]	12.1	9.0	13.2	32.4
1991[2]	12.5	8.9	13.6	35.3
1992[2,3]	11.0	7.7	13.7	29.4
1993[2,3]	11.0	7.9	13.6	27.5
1994[2,3,4]	11.5	7.7	12.6	30.0

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[4]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A44—Standard errors for Figure 3: Status dropout rates for persons ages 16–24, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
			(percent)	
1972	0.28	0.29	1.07	2.22
1973	0.27	0.28	1.06	2.24
1974	0.27	0.28	1.05	2.08
1975	0.26	0.27	1.06	2.02
1976	0.26	0.28	1.01	2.01
1977	0.27	0.28	1.00	2.02
1978	0.27	0.28	1.00	2.00
1979	0.27	0.28	1.01	1.98
1980	0.26	0.27	0.97	1.89
1981	0.26	0.27	0.93	1.80
1982	0.27	0.29	0.98	1.92
1983	0.28	0.29	0.97	1.93
1984	0.27	0.29	0.92	1.91
1985	0.27	0.29	0.92	1.93
1986	0.27	0.28	0.90	1.88
1987[2]	0.28	0.30	0.91	1.84
1988[2]	0.31	0.32	1.00	2.30
1989[2]	0.31	0.32	0.98	2.19
1990[2]	0.29	0.30	0.94	1.92
1991[2]	0.30	0.31	0.95	1.94
1992[2,3]	0.28	0.29	0.95	1.86
1993[2,3]	0.28	0.29	0.94	1.79
1994[2,3,4]	0.28	0.29	0.89	1.66

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[4]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A45—Data for Figure 4: High school completion rates for all 18- through 24-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	82.8	86.0	72.1	56.2
1973	83.7	87.0	71.6	58.7
1974	83.6	86.7	73.0	60.1
1975	83.8	87.2	70.2	62.2
1976	83.5	86.4	73.5	60.3
1977	83.6	86.7	73.9	58.6
1978	83.6	86.9	73.4	58.8
1979	83.1	86.6	72.6	58.5
1980	83.9	87.5	75.2	57.1
1981	83.8	87.1	76.7	59.1
1982	83.8	87.0	76.4	60.9
1983	83.9	87.4	76.8	59.4
1984	84.7	87.5	80.3	63.7
1985	85.4	88.2	81.0	66.6
1986	85.5	88.8	81.8	63.5
1987[2]	84.7	87.7	81.9	65.1
1988[2]	84.5	88.7	80.9	58.2
1989[2]	84.7	89.0	81.9	59.4
1990[2]	85.6	89.6	83.2	59.1
1991[2]	84.9	89.4	82.5	56.5
1992[2,3]	86.4	90.7	82.0	62.1
1993[2,3]	86.2	90.1	81.9	64.4
1994[2,3,4]	85.8	90.7	83.3	61.8

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[4]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A46—Standard errors for Figure 4: High school completion rates for all 18- through 24-year-olds, by race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Total	Race–ethnicity[1]		
		White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic
1972	0.35	0.35	1.42	2.78
1973	0.34	0.34	1.39	2.79
1974	0.33	0.34	1.38	2.57
1975	0.33	0.33	1.40	2.61
1976	0.33	0.34	1.33	2.55
1977	0.33	0.34	1.33	2.52
1978	0.33	0.33	1.32	2.45
1979	0.33	0.30	1.32	2.40
1980	0.32	0.33	1.26	2.28
1981	0.32	0.33	1.20	2.22
1982	0.34	0.35	1.26	2.36
1983	0.34	0.35	1.25	2.39
1984	0.33	0.35	1.18	2.32
1985	0.33	0.35	1.18	2.39
1986	0.33	0.35	1.17	2.29
1987[2]	0.35	0.37	1.19	2.23
1988[2]	0.38	0.39	1.33	2.70
1989[2]	0.38	0.39	1.30	2.62
1990[2]	0.36	0.37	1.23	2.35
1991[2]	0.37	0.38	1.26	2.32
1992[2,3]	0.36	0.36	1.27	2.32
1993[2,3]	0.36	0.37	1.27	2.26
1994[2,3,4]	0.36	0.36	1.19	2.06

[1]Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[3]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[4]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table A47—Data and standard errors for Figure 5: Median income for 1988 eighth graders not enrolled in educational programs and reporting income, by high school graduation status: 1994

	Total	High School Graduate	Alternative Completer	Dropout
Median earnings				
All persons	$4,900	$5,899	$2,203	$2,324
Persons with income	8,495	8,943	8,879	7,878
Standard errors				
All persons	272	185	1,138	766
Persons with income	155	113	953	610

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Third Follow-up Survey, 1994, unpublished data.

APPENDIX B

Technical Notes

Definition of Who Is a Dropout

There are variations in the dropout definitions in the existing data sources, including the Current Population Survey (CPS), the High School and Beyond Study (HS&B), and the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88). In addition, the age or grade span examined and the type of dropout rate—status, event, or cohort—varies across the data sources. Furthermore, there were potentially significant changes in CPS procedures in 1986, 1992, and 1994.

The new collection through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD) is designed to be consistent with the current CPS procedures. However, the CCD will include all dropouts in grades 7 through 12 versus only grades 10 through 12 in CPS, will be based on administrative records rather than a household survey as in CPS, and will count as dropouts anyone receiving a GED outside of a regular (approved) secondary education program as opposed to the CPS approach of counting GED certificate holders as high school completers.

One of the concerns addressed in the new National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD) data collection on dropouts is the development and implementation of a nationally consistent definition of a dropout to be used in school districts and state departments of education. Currently, there is considerable variation across local, state, and federal data collections on such issues as:

- whether those below the legal school-leaving age are identified as dropouts;
- whether students entering correctional institutions are considered dropouts;
- whether those in GED programs or with an equivalency certificate are considered dropouts;
- whether those not graduating with their class (but never leaving school) are considered dropouts; and
- whether those leaving high school early to enter college are considered dropouts.

There will, no doubt, be some discontinuities in dropout reporting as the new and more consistent data become available.

Defining and Calculating Event Dropout Rates Using the CCD

The Common Core of Data (CCD) administered by NCES is an annual survey of the state-level education agencies in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas. Statistical information is collected on public schools, staff, students, and finance.

A dropout data collection component was field tested during the 1989–90 school year. The participants were in approximately 300 school districts that included representatives from 27

states and two territories. The data were gathered through administrative records maintained ar school districts and schools. The field test data were used to inform the design of a dropout statistics component for CCD.

In the CCD dropout data collection the event of dropping out is the focus of the collection. A school dropout is defined as an individual who was enrolled in school at some time during the previous year, was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, had not graduated from high school or completed an approved educational program, and did not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions:

- death;
- temporary absence due to suspension or illness; or
- transfer to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved education program.

For the purpose of this definition:

- a school year is the 12-month period of time beginning with the normal opening of school in the fall, with dropouts from the previous summer reported for the year and grade for which they fail to enroll;
- an individual has graduated from high school or completed an approved education program upon receipt of formal recognition from school authorities; and
- a state- or district-approved education program may include special education programs, home-based instruction, and school-sponsored GED preparation.

This new collection was initiated with a set of instructions to state CCD coordinators in the summer of 1991. Those instructions specified the details of dropout data to be collected during the 1991–92 school year. Dropouts, like graduates, are reported for the preceding school year. The 1991–92 data were submitted to NCES as a component of the 1992–93 CCD data collection. More recently, the 1992–93 date were submitted as a component of the 1993–94 CCD.

There were 15 states that reported 1991–92 data that are consistent with the specified definition. State data submissions for the 1993–94 CCD show that xx states submitted dropout data for 1992–93, and in 18 of the states the data are consistent with the specified definition.

Defining and Calculating Dropout Rates Using the CPS

Event Rates

The October Supplement to the CPS is the only current national data source that can be used to estimate annual national dropout rates. As a measure of recent dropout experiences, the event rate measures the proportion of students who dropped out over a one year interval of time.

The numerator of the event rate for 1994 is the number of persons 15 through 24 years old surveyed in 1994 who were enrolled in high school in October 1993, were not enrolled in high school (grades 10–12) in October 1994, and who also did not complete high school (that is, had not received a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate) between October 1993 and October 1994.

The denominator of the event rate is the sum of the dropouts (that is, the numerator) and the number of all persons 15 through 24 years old who attended grades 10, 11, and 12 last year who are still enrolled or who graduated or completed high school last year.

The dropout interval is defined to include the previous summer and the current school year; so that once a grade is completed, the student is then at risk of dropping out of the next grade. Given that the data collection is tied to each young adult's enrollment status in October of two consecutive years, any students who drop out and return within the 12-month period are not counted as dropouts.

Status Rates

The status dropout rate is a cumulative rate that estimates the proportion of young adults who are dropouts, regardless of when they dropped out.

The numerator of the status rate for 1994 is the number of young adults ages 16 through 24 who, as of October 1994, have not completed high school and are not currently enrolled. The denominator is the total number of 16 through 24 year olds in October 1994.

CPS Design

CPS is a nationally representative sample survey of all households. The survey is conducted in approximately 60,000 dwelling units in 729 primary sampling units. Dwelling units are in-sample for four successive monthly interviews, out-of-sample for the next 8 months, and then returned to the sample for the following four months. The sample frame is a complete list of dwelling-unit addresses at the Census updated by demolitions and new construction and field listings. The population surveyed excludes members of the Armed Forces, inmates of correctional institutions, and patients in long-term medical or custodial facilities; it is referred to as the civilian, non-institutionalized population. Typically, about 4 percent of dwelling units are not interviewed, because occupants are not at home after repeated callbacks, or for some other reason.

An adult member of each household serves as the informant for that household, supplying data for each member of the household. In addition, supplementary questions regarding school enrollment are asked about eligible household members 3 years old and over. Some interviews are conducted by phone using computer assisted telephone interviewing.

CPS Dropout Data Collection

CPS data on educational attainment and enrollment status in the current year and prior year are used to identify dropouts; and additional CPS data are used to describe some basic characteristics of dropouts. The CPS provides the only source of national time series data on dropout rates. However, because CPS collects no information on school characteristics and experiences, its uses in addressing dropout issues are primarily for providing some insights into who dropouts. In addition, the sample design of the CPS yields estimates for Hispanics that tend to have large standard errors which make it difficult to understand patterns in Hispanic dropout rates.

Changes Introduced in 1986

In an effort to improve data quality, in 1986 the Bureau of Census instituted new editing procedures for cases with missing data on school enrollment items. The effect of the editing changes were evaluated for data from 1986 by applying both the old and new editing procedures. The result was an increase in the number of students enrolled in school and decrease the number of students enrolled last year but not enrolled in the current year. The new editing procedures lowered, but not significantly, the 1986 event rate for grades 10-12, ages 14 through 24, by about 0.4 percentage points, from 4.69 to 4.28. The changes in the editing procedures made even less of a difference in the status dropout rates for 16- through 24-year olds (12.2 percent based on the old procedures and 12.1 percent based on the new.

Changes Introduced in 1992

Prior to 1992, educational attainment was based on the control card questions on highest grade attended and completed. Identification as a high school graduate was derived based on attendance and completion of grade 12.

The control card items used to identify educational attainment were:

- What is the highest grade or year...has attended?
- Did...complete that grade?

The last redesign of the CPS introduced a change in the data used to identify high school completers. Dropout data from the CPS year are now based on a combination of control card data on educational attainment and October Supplement data on school enrollment and educational attainment. In 1992 the Census Bureau changed the items on the control card which measured each individual's educational attainment.

The new control card educational attainment item is as follows:

- What is the highest level of school... has completed or the highest degree...has received?

The October CPS Supplement items used to identify dropouts include the following:

- Is...attending or enrolled in regular school?
- What grade or year is...attending?
- Was...attending or enrolled in a regular school or college in October, 199-, that is of October of last year?
- What grade or year was...attending last year?

Educational attainment status is based on the response to the control card item. The following response categories are used for high school:

- 9th grade,
- 10th grade,
- 11th grade, and
- 12th grade—no diploma.

Students who last attended the 9th, 10th, or 11th grades are assumed to have dropped out in the next grade after the highest grade they reported completing.

The following response categories are used to identify high school completers:

- high school graduate—high school diploma or the equivalent (for example GED),
- some college—no degree, through
- Doctorate degree.

Although the response categories are not automatically read to each respondent, they can be used as a prompt to help clarify the meaning of a question or a response. Identification as a high school completer is based on this direct response.

Differences in the pre- and post-1992 methods of identifying high school completers come from the observation that not all 12th grade completers receive a high school diploma or equivalent, and not all holders of a high school diploma or certificate complete the 12th grade. These differences have an impact on the numbers and proportions of event and status dropouts.

In the case of the event rate, in prior years students who completed 12th grade and left school without graduation or certification were counted as completers when they were in fact dropouts. On the other hand, students who left school because they completed high school before the 12th grade were identified as dropouts when they were really early completers. The current

use of actual graduation or completion status includes the first group as dropouts and the second group as completers.

The event dropout rate now includes the 12th graders who did not receive a credential of some sort in the numerator count of dropouts and the early completers are subtracted from the numerator. The denominator is not changed. The net effect of this change is small, resulting in an increase in the aggregate event dropout rate that is not significant.

The status rate involves a third group of students who were miscoded prior to 1992. These students leave high school before completing the 12th grade, never complete the 12th grade, but later graduate or complete high school by some alternative means, such as an equivalency exam. Prior to 1992 these young adults were coded as dropouts. Since 1992 members of this group have been coded as graduates or completers. Furthermore, the explicit inclusion of high school graduation or completion, including the GED (e.g. GED" as a response category may have increased the likelihood of identifying late completers.

Under the current procedures the 12th graders who do not complete high school or the equivalent are added to the numerator of the status dropout rate and early and late completers are subtracted from the numerator. The denominator is not changed. These changes, especially the identification and removal of late completers from the dropout count, may have contributed to a decrease in the status dropout rate.

One exception to these procedures is the categorization of special education students. In principle, efforts are made by the Census Bureau to identify special education students in special schools and treat them as not enrolled. However, if special education students are not identified, they may be reported as completing 12th grade with no diploma. They will, by definition, be counted as dropouts.

Changes Introduced in 1994

During the 1994 data collection and processing two additional changes were implemented in the CPS. Computer assisted telephone interviewing was introduced, resulting in higher completion rates for each individual data item and thus less reliance on allocation of missing responses. If the allocation procedures yielded a distribution different from the 1994 reported patterns, there is the potential for a change in the distribution of the high school completion status.

In fact, when the unweighted frequency distribution for the number of status dropouts in each race/ethnicity group in 1994 is compared to the distribution in 1993, the largest change is evident for the Hispanic group—where the unweighted number of dropouts increased by 9 percent between 1993 and 1994. By comparison the unweighted dropout counts for whites decreased by 5 percent and the unweighted dropout count for blacks decreased by 11 percent. These changes translate into a small decrease in the percent of all 1994 dropouts who were white or black and a three percentage point increase in the percent of all 1994 dropouts who were Hispanic (see following table).

Table B1—Number and percent of persons, ages 16–24: October 1993 and October 1994

	1993	1994	Percent change 1993–94	Percent change of all dropouts 1993–94
Unweighted				
Total	15,704	15,132	-3.6	—
White	11,973	11,392	-4.9	-1.0
Black	2,023	1,970	-2.6	0.4
Hispanic	1,708	1,770	3.6	5.4
Weighted (in thousands)				
Total	29,631	31,296	5.6	—
White	21,499	22,080	2.7	-2.0
Black	4,536	4,805	5.9	0.7
Hispanic	3,595	4.411	22.7	12.5

—Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table B2—Number and percent of status dropouts, ages 16–24: October 1993 and October 1994

	1993	1994	Percent change 1993–94	Percent change of all dropouts 1993–94
Unweighted				
Total	1,671	1,651	-1.2	—
White	871	828	-4.9	-2.0
Black	259	231	-10.8	-1.5
Hispanic	466	507	8.8	2.8
Weighted (in thousands)				
Total	3,396	3,727	9.7	—
White	1,707	1,709	0.1	-4.4
Black	615	607	-1.3	-1.8
Hispanic	989	1,322	33.7	6.3

—Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

In 1994 there were also changes introduced in the processing and computing phase of data preparation. The benchmarking year for these survey estimates was changed from the 1980

Census to the 1990 Census, and adjustments for undercount were included. Thus, any age, sex, or race/ethnicity groups that were found to be under-represented in the 1990 Census are given increased weights. This change especially effects the weights assigned to Hispanic young adults. These changes have the potential for impacting both the numerator and denominator of the dropouts rates.

Analyses of the weighted number of dropouts in each year by race/ethnicity show that the number of Hispanic dropouts increased by 34 percent between 1993 and 1994, while whites and blacks remained relatively stable. In terms of the resulting dropout distribution, the percent black is comparable in both 1993 and 1994, but the percent white decreased by 4 percentage points, and the percent Hispanic increased by over 6 percent.

Defining and Calculating High School Completion Rates Using the CPS

The educational attainment and high school completion status data from the October CPS are also used to measure the high school graduation and completion rates.

In prior years, completion rates have been reported in a series of separate two year age groups, but no overall rates comparable to the event and status dropout rates have been computed. The completion rate reported in this report is for the young adult population in the years beyond high school—that is, the 18- to 24-year old population. These rates are reported nationally by race-ethnicity and at the state level, three year moving averages are computed to yield more stable estimates.

As was noted in the text, the state completion rates reflect the experiences of the 18- to 24-year olds living in the state at the time of the interview; thus, movements in and out of states to accommodate employment and post-secondary education may be evident in some states. For example, a state with a relatively large unskilled labor workplace sector might have a lower high school completion rate than anticipated, due to an influx of young workers. Conversely, a state with a disproportionate number of colleges and universities might have a higher high school completion rate than anticipated, due to an influx of post-secondary students.

Definition of Family Income in CPS

Family income is derived from a single question asked of the household respondent. Income includes money income from all sources including jobs, business, interest, rent, social security payments, and so forth. The income of nonrelatives living in the household is excluded, but the income of all family members 14 years old and over, including those temporarily living away, is included. Family income refers to receipts over a 12-month period.

Income for families from which no income information was obtained (about 5 percent of families) was imputed. A sequential hotdeck procedure was used. A total of 200 imputation classes were created—5 levels of the age of head of household by 5 levels of the education of the head of household by 2 levels for the employment status of the head of household, and 4 levels of the number of workers in the household. To minimize the multiple use of a single

donor, up to 5 donors were placed in each imputation class. A donor was selected at random from these when a family with missing income information was encountered. In a few instances (about 10 of 50,000 families in each year) an imputation class had no donors but a family from the class with missing income information was encountered. In these cases a donor was selected by collapsing similar classes until a nonempty imputation class was created.

To facilitate comparisons over time, the categorical family income information was transformed into a continuous family income variable. The transformation was accomplished by randomly assigning for each family an income value from the income interval to which their income belonged. For intervals below the median a rectangular probability density function was used; for those above the median a Pareto probability density function was used. The methodology has a feature that if the continuous family income variable were transformed back to a categorical family income variable, the value for each family would be identical to the original data. Based on the continuous family income variable, a family income percentile variable is calculated for each person in the survey which represents that person's position in the family income distribution. For example, if 25 percent of all persons have a lower value of family income (and 75 percent have a higher value), then the person's family income percentile variable has a value of 25. The methodology gives all persons in the same household the same value of both the categorical and continuous versions of family income. There are several issues that affect the interpretation of dropout rates by family income using the CPS. First, it is possible that the family income of the students at the time they dropped out was somewhat different than their current family income. (The problem is potentially greatest with status dropouts who could have dropped out several years ago.)

Furthermore, family income is from a single question asked of the household respondent in the October CPS. In some cases, there are persons 15 through 24 years old living in the household that are unrelated to the household respondent, yet whose family income is defined as the income of the family of the household respondent. Therefore, the current household income of the respondent may not accurately reflect that person's family background. In particular, in 1991 some of the dropouts in the 15- through 24-year age range were not still living in a family unit with a parent present. However, an analysis of 1991 status dropout rates by family income, race–ethnicity, and family status (presence of parent in the household) indicates that the bias introduced by persons not living in their parent's household is small (table B2). For example, while only 62 percent of 16- through 24-year-olds lived with at least one parent, the status dropout rates for black and white persons were similar with or without the parent present. For example, 20.6 percent of low income blacks without a parent present were dropouts compared with 21.3 percent of those living in their parent's household. In addition, the relationship between dropout rates and income held within each racial category regardless of whether the person was living in a household with his or her parent. That is, blacks and whites within income levels dropped out at similar levels—with or without the parent present. However, this was not true of Hispanics. Hispanics in upper income levels not residing with either parent were more likely than upper income Hispanics with parents present to be status dropouts.

Table B3—Percentage of status dropouts by household type by race–ethnicity and income: October 1992

	Total	Parent not present	Parent present
Total	100.0	38.0	62.0
White, non-Hispanic	100.0	37.1	62.9
Low income	19.9	20.5	18.1
Middle income	7.9	10.0	6.6
High income	2.1	7.7	1.6
Black, non-Hispanic	100.0	33.9	66.1
Low income	21.0	20.6	21.3
Middle income	7.6	9.1	7.1
High income	3.0	4.1	2.7
Hispanic	100.0	48.7	51.3
Low income	45.8	59.6	26.2
Middle income	28.4	46.0	15.4
High income	12.8	28.4	8.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1991, unpublished data.

Defining and Calculating Cohort Dropout Rates Using NELS:88

The NELS:88 baseline comprised a national probability sample of all regular public and private 8th-grade schools in the 50 states and District of Columbia in the 1987–88 school year. Excluded from the NELS:88 sample were Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, special education schools for the handicapped, area vocational schools that do not enroll students directly, and schools for dependents of U.S. personnel overseas; such school-level exclusions have a quite small impact on national estimates.

NELS:88 started with the base-year data collection in which students, parents, teachers, and school administrators were selected to participate in the survey. NELS:88 began with a target sample of 1,032 sample schools, of which 30 were deemed ineligible. Some 698 of the 1,002 eligible schools agreed to participate in the study. Given the longitudinal nature of the study, the initial school response rate of 69.7 percent was deemed too low to yield acceptable levels of schools, administrators, teachers, parents, and most importantly, students. To address this concern, a sample of sister schools was selected and 359 replacement schools were identified and added to the study. Responses were obtained from 1,057 schools, thus increasing the school response

rate to 77.7 percent (1,057/(1,002+359)). Usable student data were received for 1,052 of the schools.

The total eighth-grade enrollment for the 1,052 NELS:88 sample schools was 202,996. During the listing procedures (before 24-26 students were selected per school), 5.35 percent of the students were excluded because they were identified by school staff as being incapable of completing the NELS:88 instruments owing to limitations in their language proficiency or to mental or physical disabilities. Ultimately, 93 percent or 24,599 of the sample students participated in the base-year survey in the spring of 1988.

The NELS:88 first follow-up survey was conducted in the spring of 1990. Students, dropouts, teachers, and school administrators participated in the followup, with a successful data collection effort for approximately 93 percent of the base-year student respondents. In addition, because the characteristics and education outcomes of the students excluded from the base year may differ from those of students who participated in the base-year data collection, a special study was initiated to identify the enrollment status of a representative sample of the base-year ineligible students. Data from this sample were then combined with first and second follow-up data for the computation of 8th- to 10th-grade, 10th- to 12th-grade, and 8th- to 12th-grade cohort dropout rates.

The second follow-up survey was conducted in the spring of 1992. Students, dropouts, parents, teachers, and school administrators participated in this followup. Approximately 91 percent of the sample of students participated in the second follow-up survey, with 88 percent of the dropouts responding.

The second follow-up High School Transcript Study was conducted in the Fall of 1992. Transcript data spanning the three or four years of high school (ninth or tenth through twelfth grades) were collected for 1) students attending, in the spring of 1992, schools sampled for the second follow-up school administrator and teacher surveys[88]; 2) all dropouts and dropouts in alternative programs who had attended high school for a minimum of one term; 3) all early graduates, regardless of school contextual sample type; and 4) triple ineligibles enrolled in the twelfth grade in the spring of 1992, regardless of school affiliation. Triple ineligibles are sample members who were ineligible—due to mental or physical handicap or language barrier—for the base year, first follow-up, and second follow-up surveys. The transcript data collected from schools included student-level data (e.g., number of days absent per school year, standardized test scores) and complete course-taking histories. Complete high school course-taking records were, of course, obtained only for those transcript survey sample members who graduated by the end of the spring term of 1992; incomplete records were collected for sample members who had dropped out of school, had fallen behind the modal progression sequence, or were enrolled in a special education program requiring or allowing more than twelve years of schooling.

A total of 1,287 contextual schools and 256 noncontextual schools responded to the request

[88]School selected for the contextual components of the second follow-up the school administrator and teacher surveys—are referred to as *contextual* schools. Sample members enrolled in those schools are referred to as *contextual* students.

for transcripts. Reasons cited by school staff for not complying with the request included: inadequate permission for transcript release (some schools required parental permission for the release of minors' transcripts); no record of the sample, member, or no course-taking record because of brevity of enrollment; insufficient staff for transcript preparation (despite offers of remuneration for preparation costs); and archiving or transfer of sample member records. Student coverage rates were 89.5 percent for the total transcript sample and 74.2 percent for the dropout/alterative completers.

Missing from the cohort rates from NELS:88 is anyone who had dropped out prior to the spring of their eighth-grade year. Thus, the overall cohort rates reported here may be lower than they would have been if a younger cohort were used. This may be particularly important for Hispanics, given that CPS data show that Hispanic dropouts tend to have completed less schooling than other dropouts. The cohort rates also reflect the school enrollment status of both eligible and ineligible nonparticipants and participants, to the extent that this information could be obtained.

The following definition of a dropout was employed in NELS:88:

1. an individual who, according to the school (if the sample member could not be located), or according to the school and home, is not attending school (i.e., has not been in school for 4 consecutive weeks or more and is not absent due to accident or illness); or

2. a student who has been in school less than 2 weeks after a period in which he or she was classified as a dropout.

Thus, a student who was a temporary dropout (stopout) who was found by the study to be out of school for 4 consecutive school weeks or more and had returned to school (that is, had been back in school for a period of at least 2 weeks at the time of survey administration in the spring of 1990) would not be classified as a dropout for purposes of the cohort dropout rates reported here.

The basic NELS:88 procedure for identification of a dropout was to confirm school reported dropout status with the student's household. For the first followup, dropout status was obtained first from the school and then confirmed with the household for 96.4 percent of the dropouts. Thus only 3.6 percent of the dropouts were identified by only school-reported information. For the second followup, 4.9 percent of the dropouts were identified by only school-reported information.

The 1988–1990 dropout rate requires data from both 1988 and 1990. As a result, the size of the sample used in computing the 1988 to 1990 rate is tied to the size of the sample in 1990. Many students changed schools between 1988 and 1990. Because of the costs associated with following small numbers of students to many schools, a subsampling operation was conducted at the time of the first follow-up (figure B1). Of the 24,599 students who participated in 1988, 20,263 students were sampled, and 130 were found to be out of scope (due to death or migration out of the country). The dropout rates from 1988–1990 reflect the experiences of 20,133 sample cases. Some 1,088 sample cases dropped out and 19,045 sample cases continued in school.

The 1990–1992 rate starts from the 19, 045 student sample cases. Some 91 of the student sample cases from 1990 were identified as out of scope in 1992. The dropout rates from 1990 to 1992 reflect the experiences of 18,954 student sample cases.

The 1988–1992 rates reflect the experiences of the 20,070 student sample cases. These cases result from the 20,263 subsampled student cases in 1990, less the 92 cases that were out of scope in both 1990 and 1992, less the 91 students sample cases identified as out of scope in 1992, less the 10 dropout sample cases identified as out of scope in 1992. Note that 24 student sample cases who were out of the country in 1990 returned to school in the U.S. by spring 1992, and an additional 14 student sample cases who were out of the country in spring 1990 returned to the U.S. by spring 1992 but did not reenroll (dropouts). And, another 354 student sample cases who dropped out between 1988 and 1990 returned to school by spring 1992.

HS&B Calculation of Cohort Dropout Rates

In HS&B, students are reported as having either a regular diploma or some alternative credential—described as the equivalent of a class of 1982 held alternative credentials by 1986 refers to a comparison of alternative completers with all regular diploma recipients. The estimates of a 16.6 percent dropout rate and an 8.2 percent alternative completion rate by 1986 are based on a comparison of on-line regular diploma recipients versus all other completers. The difference in the last two estimates is due to the fact that they are computed from two differently derived variables on the public use data files.

Variables Used in Comparison of HS&B and NELS:88

Listed below are the definitions for the poverty and family composition variables used in the section comparing 10th- to 12th-grade dropout rates in HS&B and NELS:88.

Poverty

HS&B

1. Below poverty line:
   If family size (famsize) is 1 to 3 and family income (bb101) is $7,000 or less or;
   If family size is 4 to 6 and income is $11,999 or less or;
   If family size is 7 or more and income is under $15,999

2. Not below poverty line:
   All other cases.

NELS:88

Below poverty line:
   If family size (byfamsize) is I or 2 and family income (byfaminc) is $7,499 or less or;
   If family size is 3 and family income is $9,999 or less or;
   If family size is 4 or 5 and family income is $14,999 or less or;
   If family size is 6 or 7 and family income is $19,999 or less or;

If family size is 8 and family income is $24,999 or less or;
If family size is 9 or more and family income is $34,999 or less;

Not below poverty line:
All other cases.

Family composition

HS&B

1. Intact:
If father in household (bb036b=l) and mother in HH (bb036d=l)

2. Parent plus step parent
If father not in HH (bb036b=0) and mother in HH (bb036d=l) and male guardian in HH (bb036c=l) or;
If mother not in HH (bb036d=0) and father in RH (bb036b=1) and female guardian in HH (bb036e=l)

3. Single parent
If father is in HH (bb036b=l) and no other adult partner is in HH (bb036d to bb036e=0) or;
If mother is in HH (bb036d=l) and not other adult partner is in HH (bb036b to bbO36c=0)

4. Other
All other cases.

NELS:88

1. Intact:
If father in household (f1s92a=1) and mother in HH (f1s92d=1)

2. Parent plus step parent
If father not in HH (f1s92a=0) and mother in HH (f1s92d=1) and male guardian or stepfather in HH (f1s92c=1 or f1s92b=1) or;
If mother not in HH (f1s92d=0) and father in HH (f1s92a=1) and female guardian or stepmother in HH (f1s92e=1 or f1s92f)

3. Single parent
If father is in HH (f1s92a=1) and no other adult partner is in HH (f1s92d to f1s92f=0) or;
If mother is in HH (f1s92c=1) and no other adult partner is in HH (f1s92a to f1s92c=0).

4. Other
All,other cases.

Variables used in NELS:88

High School Completion Status

1. High school graduate:
   If individual has received a high school diploma (f3diplom=1);

2. Received alternative credential
   If individual has received a GED (f3diplom=2) or received a certificate of attendance (f3diplom=3);

3. Still enrolled in high school
   If individual is currently in high school (f3diplom=4) or is working toward an equivalent (f3diplom=5);

4. Dropout
   If individual is not a graduate or GED/certificate holder (f3diplom = 6)

Postsecondary Enrollment Status

1. No postsecondary education
   If no postsecondary enrollment (f3pseatn=0);

2. Enrolled in degree program
   If no degree but in associate program (f3pseatn=2), or no degree but in current bachelor program (f3pseatn=3), or hold associate degree (f3pseatn=6);

3. Certified or enrolled in certificate program
   If currently in certificate/license program (f3pseatn=1) or hold certificate or license (f3pseatn=5);

4. Other enrollment
   If currently enrolled in some other postsecondary program (f3pseatn=4).

Employment and Education Status

1. Postsecondary education only
   If traditional postsecondary education student (labfor93=1) or postsecondary student not employed (labfor93=2);

2. Postsecondary education and work
   If student is primarily a postsecondary education student (labfor93=3);

3. Employed only
   If student is primarily employed (labfor93=4);

4. Unemployed
   If student is employed 6+ months (labfor93=5) or employed 1-5 months (labfor93=6);

5. Not in labor force
   If student is unemployed and not a student (labfor93 = 7) or out of the work force (labfor93 = 8).

1993 Income Level

1. Low income
   If total 1993 earning is greater than or equal to $0 and less than or equal to $4,000 (totlear2);

2. Low middle income
   If total 1993 earning is greater than $4,000 and less than or equal to $8,778;

3. High middle income
   If total 1993 earning is greater than $8,778 and less than or equal to $12,240;

4. High income
   If total 1993 earning is greater than $12,240.

Timing of Birth

1. Prior to 8/92
   Date of first birth prior to August 1992 (f3chlddt ≤ 9208);

2. After 8/92
   Date of first birth in August 1992 or later (f3chlddt ≥ 9208).

Number of Children Born

1. None
   If number of biological children equals zero (f3numchl = 0);

2. One
   If number of biological children equals one (f3numchl = 1);

3. Two or more
   If number of biological children equals two or more (f3numchl ≥ 2).

Marital Status

1. Ever married

If respondent was ever married (f3marst = 2), divorced or separated (f3marst = 3), widowed (f3marst = 4), not married but living in a marriage-like relationship (f3marst = 5), by time of fourth followup;

2. After 8/92
   If respondent is single and was never married at time of fourth followup (f3marst = 1);

Definition of Geographic Regions in CPS

There are four Census regions used in this report: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West. The Northeast consists of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Midwest consists of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. The South consists of Delaware, Maryland, Washington D.C., Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. The West consists of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii.

APPENDIX C

Supplemental Tables

Table C1—Event dropout and retention rates and number of dropouts ages 15–24 in grades 10–12: October 1990 through October 1994

Year ending	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (in thousands)	Number of enrolled (in thousands)
1990	4.0	96.0	347	8,675
1991	4.0	96.0	348	8,700
1992[1]	4.4	95.6	383	8,705
1993[1]	4.5	95.5	381	8,469
1994[1,2]	5.3	94.7	497	9,377

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[2]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table C2—Standard errors for Table C1: Event dropout and retention rates and number of dropouts ages 15–24 in grades 10–12: October 1990 through October 1994

Year ending	Event dropout rate (percent)	School retention rate (percent)	Number of dropouts (in thousands)
1990	0.33	0.33	29
1991	0.34	0.34	29
1992[1]	0.35	0.35	30
1993[1]	0.36	0.36	30
1994[1,2]	0.37	0.37	35

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[2]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table C3—Event dropout rates, grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex and race–ethnicity: October 1972 through October 1994

Year	Total	Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic		Black, non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
				Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
				(percent)					
1972	6.1	5.9	6.3	5.0	5.6	9.8	9.3	11.6	10.9
1973	6.3	6.8	5.7	6.0	5.0	11.9	8.2	7.9	11.9
1974	6.7	7.4	6.0	6.6	4.9	10.8	12.3	12.8	7.1
1975	5.8	5.4	6.1	4.7	5.4	8.4	9.0	10.3	11.6
1976	5.9	6.6	5.2	6.3	4.9	8.5	6.3	7.6	7.1
1977	6.5	6.9	6.1	6.6	5.6	7.8	9.3	9.8	5.4
1978	6.7	7.5	5.9	6.4	5.1	11.0	9.5	15.9	8.5
1979	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.4	5.7	7.8	11.7	10.5	9.1
1980	6.1	6.7	5.5	5.7	4.8	7.7	8.7	17.6	6.7
1981	5.9	6.0	5.8	5.2	4.5	9.4	10.0	10.7	10.7
1982	5.5	5.8	5.1	4.9	4.6	8.9	6.6	9.5	8.8
1983	5.2	5.8	4.7	4.7	4.0	6.9	7.1	13.8	6.2
1984	5.1	5.4	4.8	4.8	4.1	6.0	5.5	12.3	10.2
1985	5.2	5.4	5.0	4.6	4.1	8.3	7.3	9.4	10.0
1986	4.7	4.7	4.7	3.8	3.7	5.1	5.7	12.4	11.3
1987	4.1	4.3	3.8	3.9	3.1	6.2	6.7	4.8	6.1
1988[1]	4.8	5.1	4.4	4.3	4.1	6.3	5.6	12.3	8.2
1989[1]	4.5	4.5	4.5	3.7	3.3	7.0	8.6	7.8	7.7
1990[1]	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.1	4.2	5.7	8.7	7.2
1991[1]	4.0	3.8	4.2	2.8	3.7	5.3	6.8	10.1	4.6
1992[1,2]	4.4	3.9	4.9	3.5	4.0	3.3	6.7	7.6	9.0
1993[1,2]	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.1	3.7	6.4	5.3	5.1	8.0
1994[1,2,3]	5.3	5.2	5.4	4.1	4.3	6.9	6.3	9.1	10.9

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

NOTE: Some figures are revised from those previously published.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table C4—Standard errors for Table C3: Event dropout rates, grades 10–12, ages 15–24, by sex and race–ethnicity: October 1978 through October 1994

Year	Total	Male	Female	White, non-Hispanic		Black, non-Hispanic		Hispanic	
				Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
				(percent)					
1972	0.33	0.46	0.48	0.47	0.50	1.96	1.79	3.99	3.93
1973	0.33	0.49	0.45	0.51	0.47	2.13	1.70	3.46	3.95
1974	0.34	0.51	0.46	0.54	0.46	1.99	1.99	4.00	3.04
1975	0.32	0.44	0.46	0.45	0.48	1.79	1.75	3.37	3.69
1976	0.32	0.48	0.43	0.52	0.47	1.74	1.52	3.05	2.76
1977	0.34	0.49	0.46	0.54	0.50	1.62	1.76	3.21	2.65
1978	0.34	0.51	0.46	0.53	0.48	2.00	1.71	4.22	3.35
1979	0.34	0.49	0.48	0.53	0.50	1.75	1.93	3.57	3.30
1980	0.33	0.49	0.45	0.51	0.48	1.69	1.72	4.48	2.70
1981	0.33	0.47	0.46	0.49	0.47	1.86	1.77	3.26	3.19
1982	0.34	0.49	0.46	0.52	0.50	1.81	1.59	3.19	3.34
1983	0.33	0.50	0.45	0.52	0.48	1.71	1.62	3.93	2.79
1984	0.33	0.49	0.46	0.53	0.49	1.57	1.44	3.94	3.23
1985	0.34	0.50	0.48	0.53	0.50	1.83	1.74	3.72	3.50
1986	0.32	0.46	0.45	0.48	0.47	1.45	1.51	3.92	3.68
1987[1]	0.30	0.44	0.42	0.48	0.44	1.58	1.64	2.53	2.80
1988[1]	0.36	0.52	0.50	0.55	0.56	1.71	1.67	4.52	4.09
1989[1]	0.36	0.51	0.51	0.54	0.52	1.87	2.05	3.68	3.81
1990[1]	0.33	0.47	0.47	0.52	0.50	1.49	1.67	3.47	2.98
1991[1]	0.34	0.46	0.49	0.46	0.55	1.60	1.79	3.61	2.45
1992[1,2]	0.35	0.46	0.53	0.52	0.56	1.27	1.75	2.98	3.36
1993[1,2]	0.36	0.50	0.50	0.57	0.56	1.76	1.63	2.65	2.98
1994[1,2,3]	0.37	0.51	0.53	0.55	0.57	1.76	1.68	2.91	3.27

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October (various years), unpublished data.

Table C5—Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, by age: October 1994

Age	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts	Population (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	11.5	3,727	32,560	100.0	100.0
Age					
16	3.6	129	3,611	3.5	11.1
17	6.3	233	3,695	6.3	11.3
18	12.6	433	3,425	11.6	10.5
19	14.1	496	3,521	13.3	10.8
20	13.6	462	3,392	12.4	10.4
21	14.3	512	3,589	13.7	11.0
22	14.2	486	3,412	13.0	10.5
23	12.2	461	3,794	12.4	11.7
24	12.5	515	4,120	13.8	12.7

NOTE: Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table C6—Standard errors for Table 5: Rate, number, and distribution of status dropouts, by age: October 1994

Age	Status dropout rate	Number of status dropouts (in thousands)	Percent of all dropouts	Percent of population
Total	0.28	91	—	—
Age				
16	0.49	18	2.56	0.83
17	0.64	24	2.52	0.83
18	0.90	31	2.45	0.83
19	0.93	33	2.43	0.83
20	0.94	32	2.44	0.83
21	0.93	33	2.42	0.83
22	0.95	32	2.43	0.83
23	0.84	32	2.44	0.83
24	0.82	34	2.42	0.82

—Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table C7—Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region: selected years, October 1975 through October 1994

Region	October							
	1975	1980	1985	1990[1]	1991[1]	1992[1,2]	1993[1,2]	1994[1,2,3]
	(percent)							
Total	13.9	14.1	12.6	12.1	12.5	11.0	11.0	11.5
Region								
Northeast	11.3	10.4	9.9	8.7	9.1	8.6	8.5	8.6
Midwest	10.9	11.5	9.8	9.1	9.7	7.9	8.8	7.7
South	18.9	18.2	15.2	14.5	14.1	12.4	13.0	13.5
West	13.0	14.9	14.6	14.7	15.9	14.4	12.5	14.7

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students, October (various years)," *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, and unpublished tabulations.

Table C8—Standard errors for Table C7: Status dropout rate, ages 16–24, by region: selected years, October 1975 through October 1994

Region	October							
	1975	1980	1985	1990[1]	1991[1]	1992[1,2]	1993[1,2]	1994[1,2,3]
Total	0.26	0.27	0.27	0.29	0.30	0.28	0.28	0.28
Region								
Northeast	0.52	0.51	0.54	0.57	0.54	0.50	0.50	0.49
Midwest	0.46	0.46	0.49	0.52	0.50	0.49	0.51	0.47
South	0.54	0.52	0.52	0.54	0.51	0.51	0.52	0.52
West	0.62	0.63	0.67	0.69	0.83	0.70	0.67	0.69

[1]Numbers for these years reflect new editing procedures instituted by the Bureau of the Census for cases with missing data on school enrollment items.
[2]Numbers for these years reflect new wording of the educational attainment item in the CPS.
[3]Numbers in this year may reflect changes in CPS due to newly instituted computer assisted interviewing and/or due to the change in the population controls used this year to the 1990 Census-based estimates, with adjustment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students, October (various years)," Current Population Reports, Series P-20, and unpublished tabulations.

Table C9—Demographic characteristics of the sophomore classes of 1980 and 1990

Status in 10th grade	HS&B 1980-82	NELS:88 1990-92
Total	100.0	100.0
Race–ethnicity*		
White, non-Hispanic	75.8	71.7
Minority	24.2	28.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.4	4.0
Hispanic	7.8	10.7
Black, non-Hispanic	13.4	12.5
Native American	1.6	1.1
Below poverty level		
Yes	13.0	17.6
No	87.1	82.4
Family composition		
Intact family	69.6	63.5
Non-intact family	30.4	36.5
Two adults/step-parents	8.9	15.2
Single parent	17.2	18.1
Other	4.3	3.1
Own children living in home		
Yes	0.6	2.5
No	99.4	97.5

*Not shown separately are those included in the total whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: See the technical appendix for the definitions of poverty and family composition used in these tables.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Study, Sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

Table C10—Standard errors for Table C9: Demographic characteristics of the sophomore classes of 1980 and 1990

Status in 10th grade	HS&B 1980–82	NELS:88 1990–92
Total	—	—
Race-ethnicity*		
White, non-Hispanic	1.07	1.18
Minority	1.07	1.18
Asian, Pacific Islander	0.14	0.27
Hispanic	0.40	0.86
Black, non-Hispanic	0.84	0.79
Native American	0.23	0.20
Below poverty level		
Yes	0.51	0.69
No	0.51	0.69
Family composition		
Intact family	0.66	0.69
Non-intact family	0.66	0.69
Two adults / step-parents	0.34	0.51
Single parent	0.47	0.53
Other	0.26	0.23
Own children living in home		
Yes	0.09	0.16
No	0.09	0.16

— Not applicable.
* Not shown separately are those included in the total whose race–ethnicity is unknown.

NOTE: See the technical appendix for the definitions of poverty and family composition used in these tables.

SOURCES: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, High School and Beyond Study, Sophomore cohort, First Followup Survey, 1982, unpublished data. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 First and Second Followup Surveys, 1990 and 1992, unpublished data.

Table C11—Percentage of persons attending high school or below by sex, race–ethnicity, and age: October 1994

Characteristics	Age						
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Total	27.5	5.3	2.0	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.7
Sex							
Male	33.2	6.2	1.9	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.8
Female	21.6	4.4	2.1	0.9	0.4	0.6	0.7
Race–ethnicity*							
White, non-Hispanic	22.9	3.2	1.8	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.5
Black, non-Hispanic	34.5	9.1	2.4	2.1	1.1	0.3	1.0
Hispanic	43.7	11.9	2.4	2.0	1.7	3.0	1.5

*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

Table C12—Standard errors for Table C11: Percentage of persons attending high school or below by sex, race–ethnicity, and age: October 1994

Characteristics	Age						
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Total	1.21	0.60	0.38	0.28	0.21	0.20	0.21
Sex							
Male	1.79	0.92	0.54	0.41	0.34	0.30	0.32
Female	1.60	0.77	0.55	0.35	0.24	0.28	0.29
Race–ethnicity*							
White, non-Hispanic	1.39	0.57	0.44	0.27	0.18	0.17	0.21
Black, non-Hispanic	3.80	2.46	1.23	1.16	1.06	0.44	0.79
Hispanic	5.67	3.54	1.76	1.41	1.37	1.79	1.24

*Not shown separately are non-Hispanics who are neither black nor white, but who are included in the total.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, October 1994, unpublished data.

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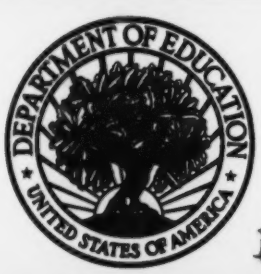
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